

MICHAEL JORDAN: The power of a legend

INSIDE

SPORTS

May 1995

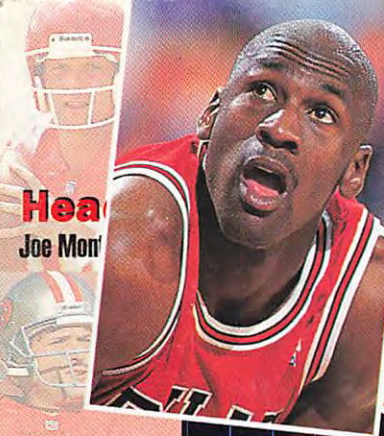
NFL
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PREVIEW

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The NFL's Perfect Man

PLUS: DOUG COLLINS' NBA PLAYOFFS PREVIEW

It will be Orlando over San Antonio for the title



Head
Joe Montana

L. Arm
Steve Young



R. Arm
Troy Aikman



Torso
Bruce Smith



Hands
Jerry Rice



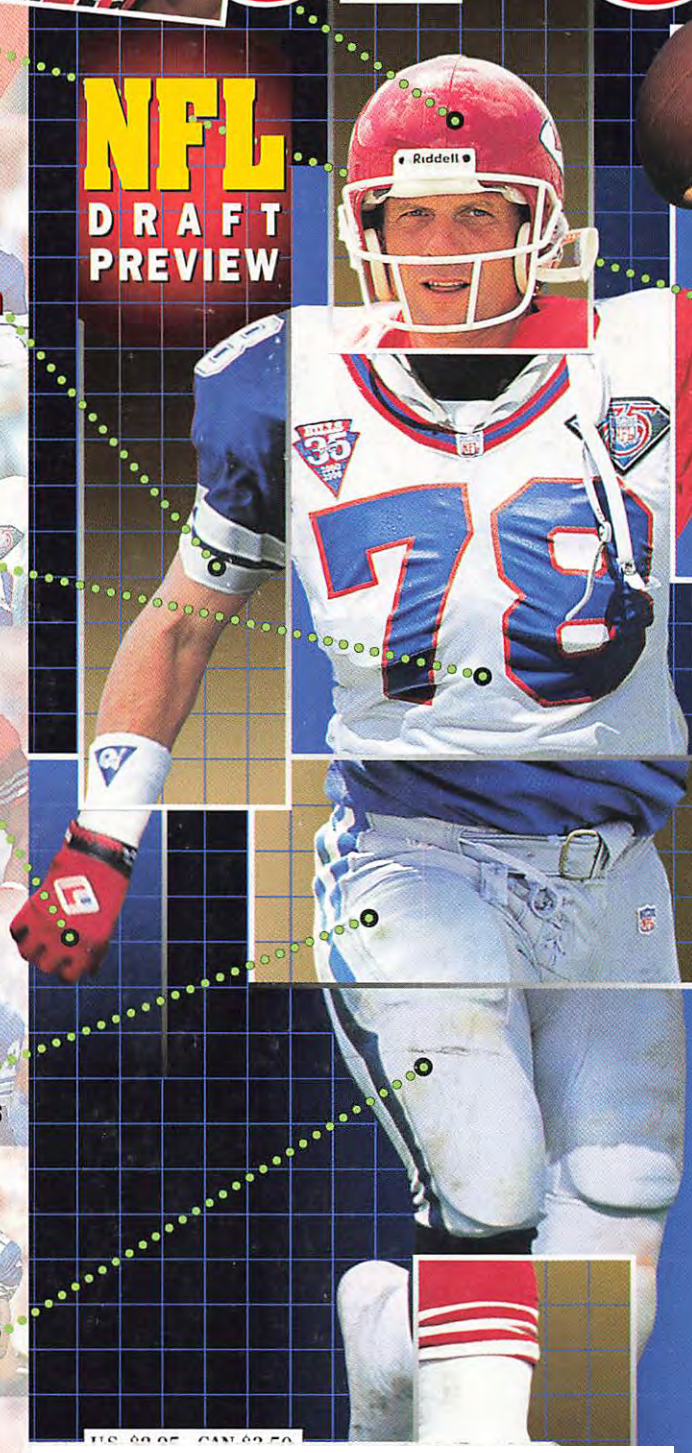
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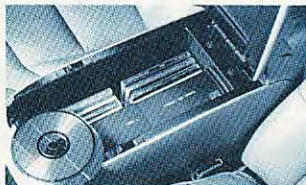


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FEATURES

20 Michael Jordan: The Power of a Legend

The possibility of Michael Jordan's comeback brought the sports world to a standstill

28 NFL Draft '95

The No. 1 draft expert reveals why the NFL draft still is the key to success, analyzes each team's needs, and ranks the prospects

By MEL KIPER JR.

44 NBA Playoffs Preview

Our expert rates the contenders and picks Orlando to beat San Antonio in the Finals

By DOUG COLLINS

58 Grant the Good

Grant Hill earns admiration not just for the greatness of his game, but for the content of his character

By JOHN FEINSTEIN

60 Everyman and Superman

Babe Ruth's very humanity is the force behind his enduring legend

By THOMAS BOSWELL

66 Generation Next

The booming NHL is looking for a few good men to carry the league in the years ahead

By AL MORGANTI

74 Princess of Ties

Fashion designer Nicole Miller creates neckwear every sports fan can love

By NOAH LIBERMAN

DEPARTMENTS

6 Inside Issues

By STEDMAN GRAHAM

8 Inside People

By PAT O'BRIEN

10 Insider

Clauses of Concern

14 Pro & Con

16 Media

By BOB RUBIN

78 Numbers

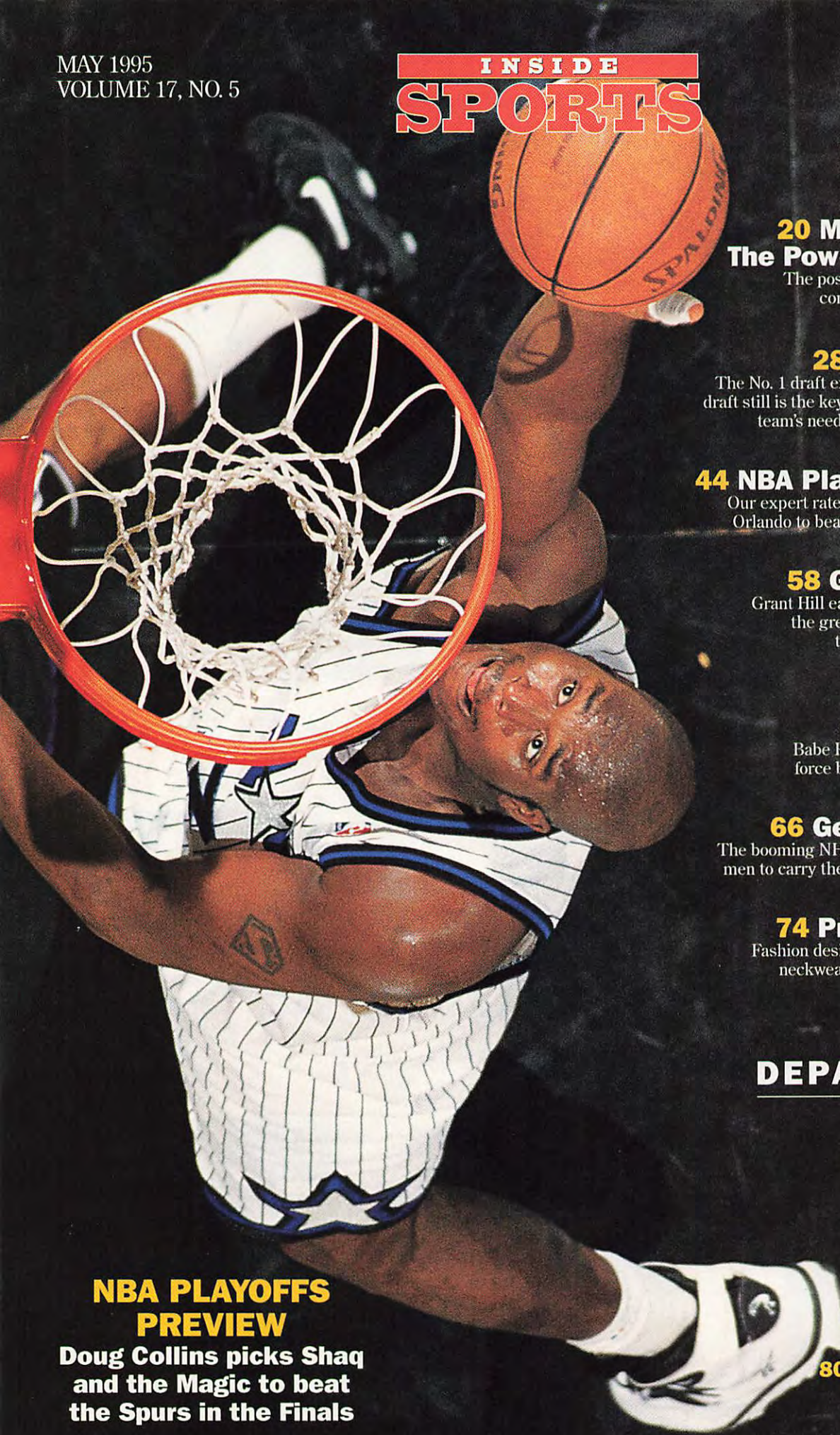
80 The Good Doctor

82 The Fan

By ELIZABETH TAYLOR

NBA PLAYOFFS PREVIEW

**Doug Collins picks Shaq
and the Magic to beat
the Spurs in the Finals**



Those who appreciate quality enjoy it responsibly.



IF YOU'RE LUCKY, THERE'LL BE SOME BUMPS ALONG THE WAY.



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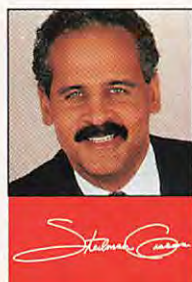
Garnish with lime.

THE SMOOTH GIN IN THE BUMPY BOTTLE.

INSIDE ISSUES

By STEDMAN GRAHAM

Pay for Play? Now's the Time



IF YOU WERE AN athlete, would you accept this deal?

"We appreciate the fact that you put millions of fans in the stands each year and get us lucrative television contracts. Your great performances

have filled our coffers with dollars. We're making a fortune in licensing fees on everything from T-shirts to coffee mugs.

"Here's what we'll do for you in return: We'll give you room and board. We'll let you take classes—when you have time—to try to improve yourself. And maybe we'll consider letting you have a part-time job, as long as it doesn't earn you more than \$1,500 a year. Take it or leave it."

College athletes have no choice but to take that deal from the NCAA—and that's wrong. The idea that college athletes ought to receive financial compensation for their play is an emotional, hot-button issue, but it needs to be looked at rationally by all who are deeply concerned about a system that is increasingly susceptible to corruption and scandal. Anyone who doesn't believe we need to change significantly the way college athletes are treated by the system need only look for an example to Florida State. The Seminoles' 1993 national football championship was tainted when representatives of professional sports agents took a group of the school's football players to a local shoe store and treated them to a \$6,000 shopping spree, in blatant violation of NCAA rules.

It's easy to point fingers at the corrupting influence of agents who want to draw undergraduate athletes into their fold. In addition, many blame athletic departments such as Florida State's for poorly supervising their players. However, that ignores the larger, overriding problem.

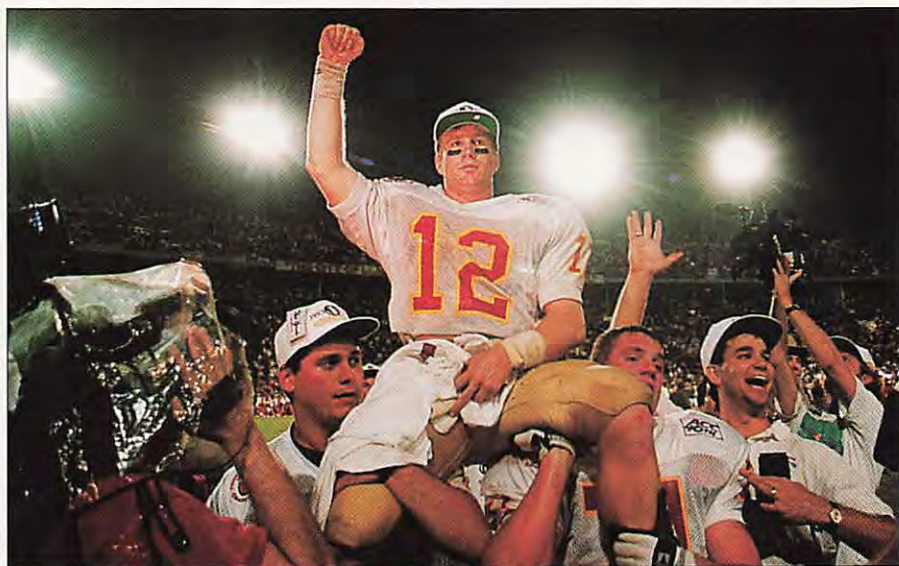
If you take a young person away from home (particularly if he comes from a home of modest means) and put him on a college campus alongside more affluent students, and you tell that young person he

isn't allowed to earn money that would give him a lifestyle comparable to that of his fellow students, you're creating a climate in which rules are begging to be broken. It's particularly hypocritical to place these restrictions on an athlete while at the same time using his talents to sell tickets, television rights, and merchandise to the tune of tens of millions of dollars.

This year school presidents and athletic directors—to their credit—are addressing the issue of improving the well-being of college athletes. It's a nice thought, but the preliminary signs don't look promising. An NCAA committee recently suggested that Division I athletes be allowed to hold part-time jobs during the school year—as long as they don't earn more than \$1,500. That's not \$1,500 a month, mind you. That's \$1,500 for the year.

they're going to cash in big when they turn pro, so what difference does it make? A survey of more than 1,100 Division I college basketball players conducted by *The Charlotte Observer* found that almost 40% of the players think they might play pro basketball. Only about 1% of collegians actually make it to the pros. The idea that all major college football and basketball players are heading toward an eventual pot of gold is nonsense. For most, the glory years end when their college eligibility runs out.

College athletes already are getting scholarships sometimes worth tens of thousands of dollars. True enough, and we shouldn't underestimate the value of that scholarship. A young athlete should be grateful for the opportunity to parlay his physical skills into an education. However, no one has any moral or ethical problem when students on



DAMIAN STROHMEYER/ALLSPORT

Senseless NCAA rules figured in the scandal that tainted Florida State's football title.

And, to add further constraints, players can't seek a better life for themselves at another campus without having to sit out a year of competition. That's a heavy price to pay for a young man trying to find a situation and a campus that's right for him and his future. As Wake Forest president Thomas Hearn has said, "These rules don't make sense to anybody."

The rules need to be changed.

Let's start by knocking down the arguments presented by those who oppose any kind of "pay for play" system for NCAA athletes. Here's a quick round of point-counterpoint.

College athletes don't make money now, but

academic scholarships are paid for work-study or off-campus jobs. Why the different standard for athletes?

Paying players for their efforts runs counter to the very idea of amateur athletics. It smacks of greed and corruption. On the contrary, it's the status quo that invites corruption. Dangle cash or merchandise in front of athletes forbidden from earning decent spending money and—human nature being what it is—many will jump at it. The days of Joe Hardy heading straight from class to the gridiron to draw plays in the dirt with his finger are long gone, if they ever existed. Today's players are de facto professionals. They are expected to

devote as much time to their sports as the pros do. They are ordered to work out in the offseason. They generate mountains of revenue for their institutions and six-figure salaries and endorsement contracts for their coaches. But they can't negotiate a fair value for their services.

I suggest that the NCAA appoint a task force to examine the treatment of college athletes. This task force should be charged with the following objectives:

- Establish a financial compensation system for athletes, giving them a small piece of the revenues they generate, possibly in the form of bonuses. The system would be uniform throughout Division I to avoid potential bidding wars for athletes.

- Tie compensation to educational objectives. In order to receive a stipend for athletic competition, the player must commit to spending four years on campus and must maintain a reasonable grade-point average. If he leaves early or gets poor grades, he forfeits the money.

- Establish an effective assistance program for players who are behind academically. It also would provide a forum for those who feel they have been mistreated by their schools. According to the *Observer*, one in five basketball players believe they were lied to by coaches during the recruitment process. More than 40% say they have been forced to continue to play despite significant injury. If time and money can be spent investigating and acting against schools for minor infractions, it can be spent on behalf of athletes who believe they are being taken advantage of.

These changes won't sit well with traditionalists. We all would prefer intercollegiate sports as it was depicted in the movie "Rudy." In reality, though, athletic programs—indeed, entire campuses—can be turned upside down over a spending spree at a shoe store.

We have a choice. We can have a system in which players are vulnerable to money offered under the table, or we can create a new system in which players aren't forced into austerity and in which, as a consequence, the temptations aren't so strong.

In my mind, the choice is clear. It's time to give Rudy a paycheck. ■

STEDMAN GRAHAM's commentary appears regularly. His book, "The Ultimate Guide to Sport Event Management and Marketing," was published in March.

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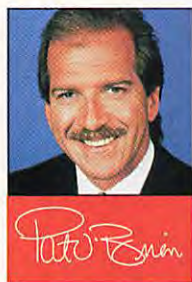
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INSIDE PEOPLE

By PAT O'BRIEN

Far From the Six-Ring Circus



KAREEM ABDUL-Jabbar isn't the kind of guy who sits around and hopes for yet another basketball honor, not even the highest basketball honor: his induction into the Hall of Fame on May 15. "I kind of

figured that if I didn't make it in, something was wrong," Abdul-Jabbar says. "It wasn't like this wasn't anticipated. I'll always be that person in the record book, and the record book is kept current."

The record book will tell you that in 20 NBA seasons Kareem scored 38,387 points—by far the most ever—earned six MVP awards, played in 18 All-Star Games (what were they thinking the other two years?), made the playoffs 18 times, and won six championship rings. Most of those marks are safe, but the one Abdul-Jabbar believes will stand forever is his record for most postseason points: 5,762. When Kareem scored those points, they meant something. Championships were at stake.

What does one of the greatest basketball players in history find himself doing these days? Oh, there's plenty of corporate stuff to keep him busy; Abdul-Jabbar is an ambassador for the NBA, traveling overseas to do clinics and things; there are appearances here and there. But he leaves the celebrity golf tournaments to some of the other lads, and he really isn't going to warm up to those old-timers games either. In fact, when members of the press were calling Kareem an old-timer, he still was winning NBA championships.

"I was in better shape than almost anybody at 40," says Abdul-Jabbar, who'll turn 48 on April 17. "The year I turned 40 was the easiest year I had in professional basketball, and the Lakers had the easiest time in the postseason. We lost three games total in the playoffs."

When you ask Abdul-Jabbar what irked him the most about his tenure in the NBA, he says "the travel"—but coming in a close second is "being sniped at by members of the press and by Wilt Chamberlain." We'll

let Kareem and Wilt argue somewhere else. As for the press, there was a general misunderstanding about Kareem. Did he hate the media? Did he hate himself? Did he hate white people? Did he hate talking? Did he have something in his background that he didn't want out?

"I didn't have a whole lot to hide," Abdul-Jabbar says. "When it came down to it all, I just wanted some privacy so I could have some peace. It didn't have anything to do with me trying to hide anything. I just felt that by doing my job well and relating to members of the press about my job—why I liked it, and those things—I thought it should end right there. But it didn't work that way. They want to get in bed with you. Howard Stern would love to broadcast from

Asked about the approach of the \$100 million athlete, Kareem sighs. "They don't know how good they have it," he says. Does it drive him nuts? He calmly says no. "I understand why they are ignorant," he says. "They don't understand. It's their problem." What about the penchant today's multimillionaires have for whining and bragging and talking trash? Kareem brushes it off quickly and succinctly: "As far as delivering, none of them can hold a candle to what I did." Period. Next topic.

I wonder—and I always have wondered—why nobody else developed the almost unstoppable skyhook, Kareem's weapon for nearly three decades in high school, college, and the pros. "You know, everybody wanted to soar in the air like

Dr. J and Michael Jordan," he says. "Pivot skills aren't really that sexy. Sometimes I sit back and wonder if I could get out there and do it for a quarter—but that, of course, is just a dream, not a serious thought."

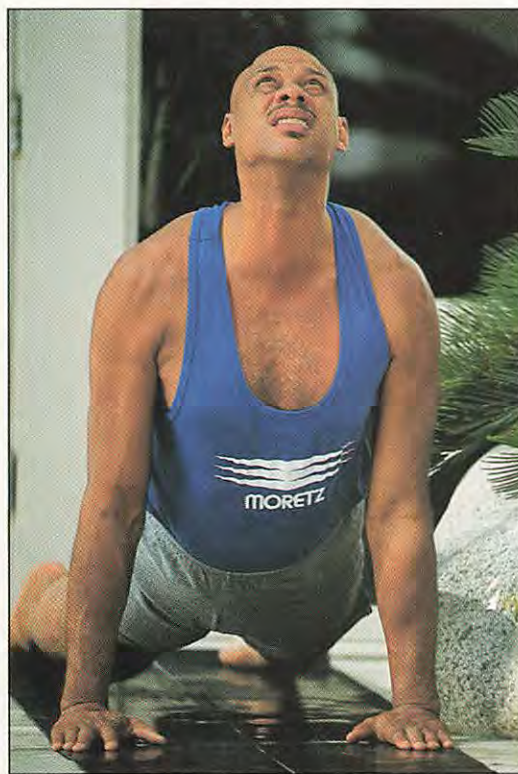
As for serious memories, some of the best are from those Los Angeles Lakers teams of the '80s, teams that still are on everyone's mind. "We were a team of destiny, and we endured for a decade," Abdul-Jabbar says. "That meant a lot. We were more than a quick thing. People had faith in us, and more often than not we delivered."

Kareem is very much at peace with himself, and his image, and his fans. He is pursuing an acting career, and he cares deeply about his kids, computers, and keeping up with his yoga. When somebody wants to take a trip down memory lane he's happy to oblige, but he makes it clear that times have changed. "Very few teams play up to that level these days," he says. When I suggest that not a lot of people focus on championships,

he puts it into perspective: "No, the focus is on making plays. The plays of the day. Chris Berman is ruling these people's lives. He's become like Big Brother."

As Berman might say about Kareem's entry into the Hall of Fame, "He could go all the way." In fact, he has. ■

PAT O'BRIEN's insightful profiles of sports personalities appear monthly.



"Sometimes I wonder if I could get out there and do it for a quarter," says a still-fit Kareem.

my bedroom. Things have changed, but if I had to deal with this now, I'd be the same person. I'd find a way to cope."

One of the differences between Kareem and today's NBA performer is, obviously, the big bucks. When he won his first MVP award in 1971, he was the highest-paid player in the league at \$250,000—which to most of the world still is a lot of money but to today's NBA star is chump change.



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Law

Clauses of Concern

WHEN SAN ANTONIO SPURS forward Dennis Rodman missed a 1994 preseason game, was ejected from another, and violated numerous team rules concerning practices and personal appearances, the club suspended Rodman without pay and fined him \$15,000. Gregg Popovich, the Spurs' director of basketball operations, told reporters, "We would like for Dennis to conduct himself in a manner that is more within the framework of the team." The Spurs punished Rodman under the umbrella of the so-called "morals clause" in basketball's collective bargaining agreement. Whether Rodman's behavior violated that clause—and whether the discipline imposed was justified—is the subject of a grievance procedure before an arbitrator.

Morals clauses have been included in professional sports and sports-related contracts for decades, and the Rodman case is but one example of how they have come to affect almost all areas of an athlete's personal and professional behavior. Cloaked in vague, innocuous-sounding language that, taken alone, almost no one could object to, morals clauses in reality seem to give employers a good deal of leeway to suspend, fine, and otherwise discipline athletes for their conduct.

Take the NBA's clause. Paragraph 5 of the Uniform Player Contract—which comes under the scope of the collective bargaining agreement that expired last year but remains in effect under a no-strike, no-lockout pledge by players and owners—obligates any player in the league to "give his best services, as well as his loyalty to the Club"; to "always conduct himself on and off the court according to the highest standards of honesty, morality, fair play, and sportsmanship"; and not

to "do anything which is detrimental to the best interests of the Club or of the Association."

To give players some idea of the conduct expected of them, each club must provide the league and the players association with team rules, based on a 26-page model agreed upon by the league and the union. These rules cover such mundane areas as how salary checks and hotel expenses are to be paid, and how soon before a game players must be dressed. It also addresses trickier questions that are open to interpretation.

Players association executive

Major league baseball also has an arbitration system in place to deal with disputes between players and clubs over possible violations of morals clauses. Gene Orza, associate general counsel of the Major League Baseball Players Association, calls the clauses a public relations attempt by baseball to reassure the ticket-buying public that players are solid citizens and says they imply "a certain moral self-righteousness" by management. Indeed, the standard baseball contract has a clause entitled "Loyalty" that calls for pledges of good behavior "to the American public."



"Morals" strictures such as the one under which the Spurs disciplined Rodman are coming under increasing scrutiny.

director Charles Grantham points out that the rules call for each player to keep himself in "first-class physical condition." "That can vary from doctor to doctor," says Grantham, and he adds that disputes frequently arise, "particularly over the weight clauses." The rules also set forth the maximum fine for an "unexcused absence" from an exhibition game at \$1,000. But since the rules are only a model for each club, there are frequent disputes over whether fines imposed by a club—such as in the Rodman situation—are "reasonable." That's why Rodman files his grievance.

Despite such lofty language, violations of the morals clause rarely, if ever, have been used by a club to rid itself of a troublesome player. The New York Mets considered terminating outfielder Vince Coleman's contract in August 1993 after he threw a firecracker into a crowd outside Dodger Stadium in Los Angeles and injured a two-year-old girl. Mets co-owner Fred Wilpon stated publicly, "We don't want him on this team." But instead of testing their rights under the morals clause by dumping Coleman outright, the Mets traded him to the Kansas City Royals after he plead-

ed guilty to a reduced charge. And when New York Yankees pitchers Fritz Peterson and Mike Kekich caused a public uproar in spring training of 1973 by trading spouses, the club continued to carry both players until it could arrange a trade of Kekich.

NBC Sports won't comment on how it is handling the case of O.J. Simpson, who was under contract with the network at the time of his arrest for murder last June. NBC has a standard morals clause in its contracts for on-air talent that gives the network the right to terminate employment for any behavior "degrading you in society or bringing you into public disrepute, contempt, scandal, or ridicule" or that "shocks, insults, or offends the community." John Ertmann, vice president/negotiations at NBC Sports, says that although there have been some instances where a discussion has been held between NBC Sports and individual sportscasters regarding questionable or controversial behavior, the sports division never has used this clause to discipline an on-air employee.

The controversy surrounding morals clauses has many wondering about the future of the concept. One player agent calls the current NBA system a "good framework" and says that the league has come a long way from "a time when the standard player agreement pretty much gave a club authority to rule as judge and jury." Grantham says that in the next labor contract with the NBA his union would like to see a maximum time limit placed on the length of any arbitration over violations and punishment under such clauses. "Players have finite careers," he says, and thus need this added protection to make sure they can continue playing while they challenge perceived injustices.

Both sides involved have doubts about whether morals clauses could stand up to a court challenge. Indeed, just weeks before Simpson's arrest, Ertmann told a gathering of attorneys that if a court had to rule on the constitutionality of NBC's morals clause, "I shudder to think what might happen."—Linda J. Cohen

Venues

The Rockies' Top Draft Pick

THE COZY RELATIONSHIP between beer and baseball has taken a new commercial turn. In Coors Field, the Colorado Rockies' new downtown Denver ballpark named for the brewing company, beer isn't just sold—it's also brewed. Down the right field line, on two floors of a four-story warehouse that was kept intact and incorporated into the design of the park, fans can find the SandLot Brewery.

The Rockies planned to put a bar and restaurant in that space, so when Coors Brewing Co. approached the club last summer with the idea for a microbrewery that would be open year-round, the team was receptive. "We want that to be a 12-month-a-

year operation," says John McHale Jr., who was the Rockies' executive vice president of operations before taking a position as president and chief executive officer of the Detroit Tigers. "We thought we had a better chance of investing it with appeal and life if we could make it different from what you might expect from a restaurant in a corner of a ballpark."

Ed LeMieux II, Coors' brand manager for new products and new business ventures, says the SandLot always will have a minimum of four alcoholic beers and one non-alcoholic brew available. The facility has a brewmaster on site and a seating capacity of about 225. Nearly half of the 1,700-square-foot space is on the first

floor of what formerly was known as the Student Movers building. The remainder—including the necessary equipment to brew 4,000 barrels annually—occupies the building's basement.

The SandLot joins a burgeoning microbrewery market in a revived area of Denver known as Lower Downtown. (A microbrewery has annual production of less than 15,000 barrels of beer, and a brewpub is a restaurant-brewery that sells at least 50% of its beer on the premises.) The city has eight microbreweries and brewpubs, and most are concentrated within a mile of Coors Field. The park's location contributed to the decision to go ahead with the microbrewery, as

did Coors' experience with what are called "specialty" beers. The SandLot's beers also are sold at Coors Field concession areas, giving the company the opportunity to test-market new products at the ballpark. "It seemed like a chance to do something out of the mainstream," McHale says. "It fit in with what else was going on in Lower Downtown—and there was a chance to do something special as a pilot project for our partner and major advertiser, the Coors Brewing Co."

Coors has been producing specialty brews for various seasons and occasions, including a beer called "Winterfest" that comes out around Christmas. The SandLot could concoct some enduring ales, lagers, pilsners, and stouts with names tied to the national pastime. But don't look for a cold six-pack of SandLot in your local liquor store. None of the beers is sold outside the park.

—Jack Etkin



Trends

Minors to Majors: Up the Establishment!

THEY'RE A HIT WITH BASEBALL fans, players, and owners alike. Little wonder, then, that independent minor leagues are popping up all over the country.

Although the labor dispute has tarnished major league baseball's image, the sport is booming at the grassroots level. That popularity is reflected in the emergence of independent leagues, whose teams have no affiliation with major league organizations. In the past two years, at least a half-dozen such leagues have formed, and plans for more are in the works.

Total control over the product is the most obvious advantage to owning an independent team. Unlike minor league clubs affiliated with a major league organization, independent teams hold their fate in their own hands. Players

on an independent team sign a one-year contract with an option for an extension, which ensures they'll stay put for at least one entire season. In contrast, players on affiliated teams come and go constantly. Fans can have a hard time forming strong bonds with the players, and the team

goal is developing talent rather than winning titles.

Miles Wolff, a part-owner of two affiliated minor league teams, grew tired of watching his best players shuttle out of town soon after they arrived. That's one of the reasons he founded the sixth team Northern League in 1993, the first independent

league in more than 30 years to demonstrate staying power.

"Having a major league affiliate isn't the best way to run a team," Wolff says. "I didn't like the restrictions. You don't play to win, so the product you put on the field isn't important. You're there to train a shortstop who is making five errors a night. People pay their money to cheer their home team,



not to see players develop."

With freedom, however, comes risks. Independent teams can't rely on a parent organization to assume the costs of salaries, insurance, and equipment. Nevertheless, Bruce Engel, founder of the eight-team Western League, which is scheduled to debut this season, thinks his ability to put a complete product on the field will put fans in the seats.

"In the Western League, you're looking at \$750,000 in total costs for a team," says Engel, who has ownership interests in two league teams. "That can be about double the budget of an established team, but you can expose the players to the community and have them there for fans to identify with, enhancing your ability to boost attendance. It's a fallacy to believe that sports competition is interesting if you're not playing to win a championship."

The quality of play in independent leagues is about what you'd find at the Single-A and Double-A level, but you'll find a sprinkling of former big-leaguers in the mix. Independent teams specialize in finding players who slipped through the cracks of the established system. In 1993, its first season, the Northern League featured 12 former major-leaguers.

One who found new life with an independent team is Leon Durham, who last played in the majors in 1989. Unable to hook up with an affiliated minor league team in his quest to return to the majors, he joined the Northern League in '93. After two seasons with the St. Paul Saints, Durham signed a minor league contract with the California Angels in January. "The Northern League got me a Triple-A contract with California," says the 37-year-old Durham, who has a .277 in 10 major league seasons. "It did a good job for me as far as giving me a chance to stay in baseball."

With the number of affiliated minor league teams having leveled off at about 150 over the past 10 years, independent leagues have taken professional baseball to markets that were starved for the sport. Says Wolff: "Cities want minor league parks. Cities are fighting each other for teams."

It seems reports of baseball's death are greatly exaggerated.

—William Wagner

Culture

What's in a Name? That Is the Question

AMID THE MEDIA HYPE lavished upon freshman basketball players Felipe Lopez and Zendon Hamilton at St. John's University this past season, you may have missed the team's most significant change: its nickname.

Sports teams at St. John's, a liberal arts school of 20,000 students in Jamaica, N.Y., had gone by the moniker "Redmen" for 124 years, but after pressure from Native American groups who took offense to the nickname, the school rechristened its teams the "Red Storm." In doing so, St. John's joined a growing group of image-conscious American colleges—including Marquette, the University of Massachusetts Lowell, Siena, Dartmouth, Eastern Michigan, and Stanford—that have abandoned Native American nicknames.

Despite the trend, a large number of U.S. colleges, both four-year and two-year, retain Native American nicknames for their teams, including the Miami (Ohio) Redskins, the North Dakota Fighting Sioux, and the Central Michigan Chippewas. Some argue in favor of tradition or cite the cost of a change; others contend that using a title such as "Redskins" is a way of honoring Indians.

"I don't know what all the commotion is about the Indian names," says Arthur Schechner, a St. John's basketball season ticket holder from Brooklyn. "Nobody is trying to be offensive by calling the team the 'Redmen,' and Indians should consider it a tribute to their people."

Tim Giago, who helped found the Native American Journalists Association, says thanks but no thanks to such "tributes." Giago recounts a 1994 incident in which Seminole and Ojibwe Indians protested the nickname of the NFL's Washington Redskins. According to Giago, Redskins fans yelled racial epithets at the protesters, spat on them, and brandished plastic tomahawks. "Why

don't you go back to where you came from, you filthy redskin?" one reportedly screamed. Giago says "redskin" is as offensive to American Indians as "nigger" is to African Americans.

Team names are only part of the problem. Worse, says Giago, is what he calls the "mascotization" of Native Americans. In his book "Notes From Indian Country," he writes: "It is not so much the fact that a team is named after a race of people or the color of that people's skin, but the sham rituals and ridiculous impersonations that become part of those rituals that are an insult to every American Indian residing on this continent." At last look, University

FOUR-YEAR DEGREE-GRANTING COLLEGES WITH NATIVE AMERICAN TEAM NICKNAMES

Aztecs: San Diego State
Braves: Alcorn State, Bradley, Chowan, Goldey Beacom, Husson, Ottawa, Pembroke State, Quinnipiac, West Georgia
Chiefs: Springfield
Chippewas: Central Michigan
Choctaws: Mississippi College
(Fighting) Illini: Illinois
Indians: Adams State, Arkansas State, Catawba, Indiana (Pa.), McMurray, Midwestern State, Newberry, Northeast Louisiana, Southeast Missouri State, Southern Colorado
Mohawks: North Adams State
Redmen: Carthage, Northeastern Oklahoma State, Rio Grande
Redskins: Miami (Ohio), Southern Nazarene
Seminoles: Florida State
(Fighting) Sioux: North Dakota
Tribe: Huron, William & Mary
Warriors: Baptist Christian, California State-Stanislaus, Calvary Bible, Daemen, East Stroudsburg, Eastern Connecticut State, Hendrix, Indiana Institute of Technology, Keuka, Lewis-Clark State, Lycoming, Merrimack, Midland Lutheran, Southern Wesleyan, Sterling, Webber College, Western Baptist, Winona State, Wisconsin Lutheran
Utes: Utah

of Illinois halftime revues still featured "Chief Illiniwek," the school's longtime mascot, performing a high-stepping, whirling dance intended to be a loose interpretation of an Algonquin warrior.

Although the Illinois athletic department has said Illiniwek is here to stay, the chief lately has been the object of student protests. Last year Arkansas State abolished its "Runnin' Joe" character, consigning him to a growing throng of excommunicated Native American mascots—Marquette's "Willie Wampus" and Syracuse's "Saltine Warrior" among them.

Perhaps the most well-known misuse of Indian imagery—and the one that's drawn the strongest reactions from Native Americans—is the famed "tomahawk chop" developed by fans of the Florida State Seminoles and adopted up by Atlanta Braves followers in the early '90s. Choctaw chief Jim Harris recalls former President Jimmy Carter and Braves owner Ted Turner "chopping" on national television during the 1991 World Series.

"That was the low point of my role as a Native American political activist," Harris says. "What we saw that night on television set back [Indian civil rights] a century or more—the [former] President of the United States lampooning our culture and our people at the nation's largest sporting event."

The more vociferous opponents of changes to Indian nicknames might think schools simply are kowtowing to the forces of political correctness, so it came as a surprise to some that the ring-leader of the "Red Storm" change at St. John's was legendary former Redmen basketball coach Lou Carnesecca. "While sentiment may have been against us changing our name," Carnesecca says, "if even one [Native American] person was at all offended by the name Redmen, then we had to make the change."

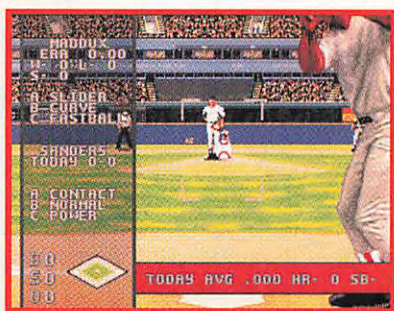
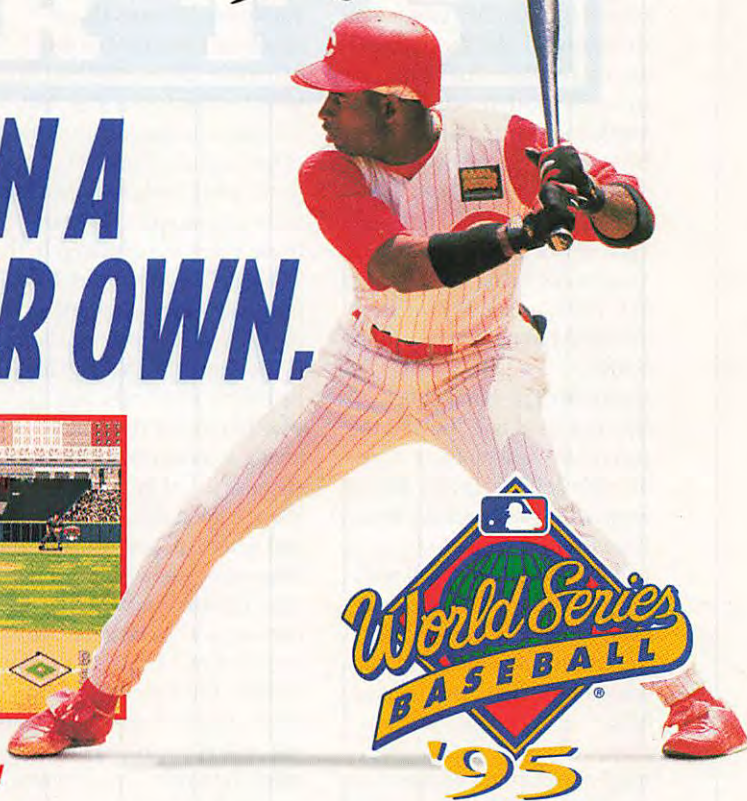
Although derogatory team names aren't the most pressing problem facing Native Americans, Harris says the names nevertheless stand as strong symbols of the wrongs Indians have suffered and the harmful stereotypes they have endured for centuries. "It's true that we have much more important issues maligning our people than insults: alcoholism, human rights violations, legal battles over property," he says. "But at the foundation of our problems is the same lack of dignity shown us that was shown to our fathers, our grandfathers, and our great-grandfathers. If we don't have our pride left, then what do we have?"—Mark Mandrake

In the February issue of INSIDE SPORTS, former major league baseball player Paul Schaal was incorrectly reported to have been married nine times. Schaal has been married five times. INSIDE SPORTS regrets the error.

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Have the NBA's 1994-95 rules changes worked?

IN RESPONSE TO CRITICISM THAT ITS GAME HAD DEVOLVED INTO A SLOW, BRUTISH, DEFENSE-ORIENTED war of attrition, the NBA this season instituted a set of rules changes to curb violence and restore high-scoring offenses. The three-point line has been shortened to 22 feet all around; hand-checks are prohibited beyond the foul line; and penalties for technical fouls and flagrant fouls have been increased. Perhaps the most problematic change is in the illegal defense rules concerning "hedging." Previously, a defender guarding a man above the tip of the circle could drop into the lane for 2.9 seconds and then get back, but now once he drops below the foul line he must immediately double-team the man with the ball, or be called for illegal defense.



ANDREW D. BEINSTEIN/NBA PHOTOS

Phil Jackson, who coached the Chicago Bulls to three straight NBA championships, believes the new rules have been effective. New York Knicks coach **Pat Riley**, who won four titles with the Los Angeles Lakers in the 1980s, believes otherwise. The two spoke with associate editor MARK MANDRAKE.



JONATHAN DANIEL/ALL SPORT

Jackson: As a whole, the league has done a good thing with the rules changes. The three-point rule, for one, is something that has created an alternative. I like the angles on the sidelines, and with some shots, that extra few feet is making the difference.

Riley: If they really want to open up the game, they should go back to 25 feet and make it worth four points. That would bring the defenses out. The closer line is just bringing offenses closer to the basket.

Jackson: The hand-check rule is a good one. Toward the end of last season guys were literally setting up and letting loose with two-handed shoves. It was very difficult to bring a ball off a screen and roll with it. Guys were falling down all over, especially those who weren't strong enough to take some of the hard, two-handed hits.

Riley: The fans dislike the hand-check rule because they see a lot of calls. We're getting as many fouls now away from the ball as we are on it. When you're on defense, the only thing you have to balance yourself is your hands.

I hate the way the game is being played now. The hand-check rule has changed dramatically how players have played their whole life.

League officials want points, and they're going to get them—from the free throw line.

Jackson: Perhaps [hand-checking] was part of the defensive philosophy that kept teams going for so long, but it's basically against the rules of basketball. That sort of play is not what basketball is about, plain and simple. Pat knows these rules. He came up in the '60s and '70s, like I did. Back then guys were standing people up and stiff-arming them.

Riley: Sure, the Knicks have a defensive emphasis, but whether or not the league is trying to penalize us for our success is not important. We're a good defensive team and a hard, physical team. Because we got the most notoriety for this, we were the ones who were targeted. It was always, "The Knicks, the Knicks, the Knicks." When [Bulls forward] Scottie Pippen was asked about the new rules, he said, "This is going to hurt the Knicks."

Jackson: Basketball is a non-contact sport. You are allowed to put a body on people, but it's still explicitly non-contact. There's always going to be a charge, a block, a screen, a pick. It will be a constant challenge to encourage legal contact, but what contact brings into play is the pulling bodies

around, bullying, and intimidation. Until this point, the objective seemed more like "Let's go out and load up on big bodies, intimidators." These rules changes came out of that mentality. The league was left with no recourse. Now when people bring this tough stuff to the table, they know that if you fight or make trouble or retaliate, you will be penalized.

Riley: Maybe the physical style of last season got out of hand a little bit. It's a very physical and competitive game, but there is no room for fighting.

Jackson: The new illegal defense rule is a problem. This rule of "not hedging" has fast become a ploy for offenses to make the defenses step over the line so they can get a free shot. I'm sure that's not the intent of the rule, and most coaches agree. We teach players to band together as a team on defense. So, league, don't take away the natural response of a team playing defense. The new illegal defense is taking players' instincts away and making it extremely difficult to create a cohesive unit on defense.

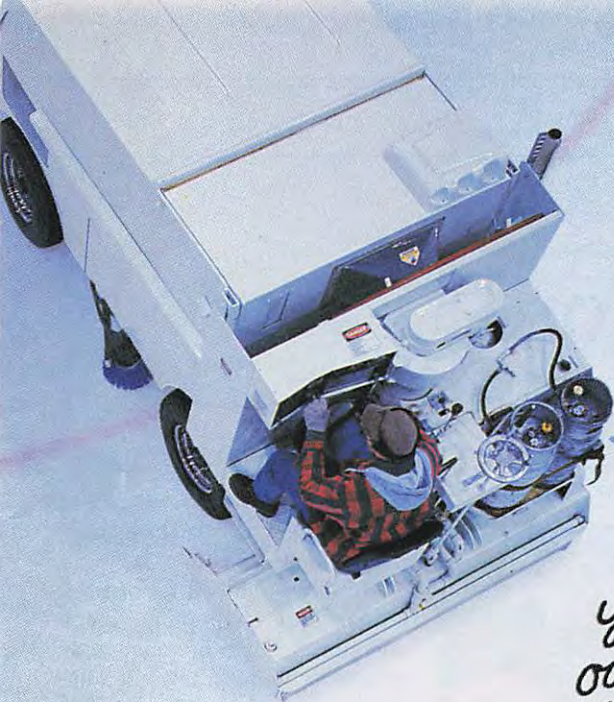
Riley: The illegal defense rule is a real momentum-killer. Four or five teams have taken advantage of it, and they're going to make a mockery of the game. Combine the hand-

check ban with the illegal defense guidelines, and you've got guys running away from the basket. You're almost seeing offensive players standing in the parking lot to set up isolations. You're watching a three-hour game with 150 free throws. It's like watching baseball. It's stopping the game even more, and the whole object is not to stop it.

Jackson: Riley has a point. In the old days when drivers came, or an open alley came, or when players faked the pass, you had a chance to get back on D. Now you step over the line, and—whistle. Too late, you blew it. If you're getting six or seven illegal defenses called per game, it's stopping the flow of normal basketball. What's nice about the game is the ebb and flow, the up-and-down action.

Riley: Overall, I don't believe you want to be radical and make this many major changes in one year. We are adapting to it. We're not changing our plan. We're trying to raise our defense to another level and continue to show people that defense is still a big part of this game, no matter what interpretations are coming down.

I'm tired of talking about new rules. It's not about rules anymore. It's about winning games. ■



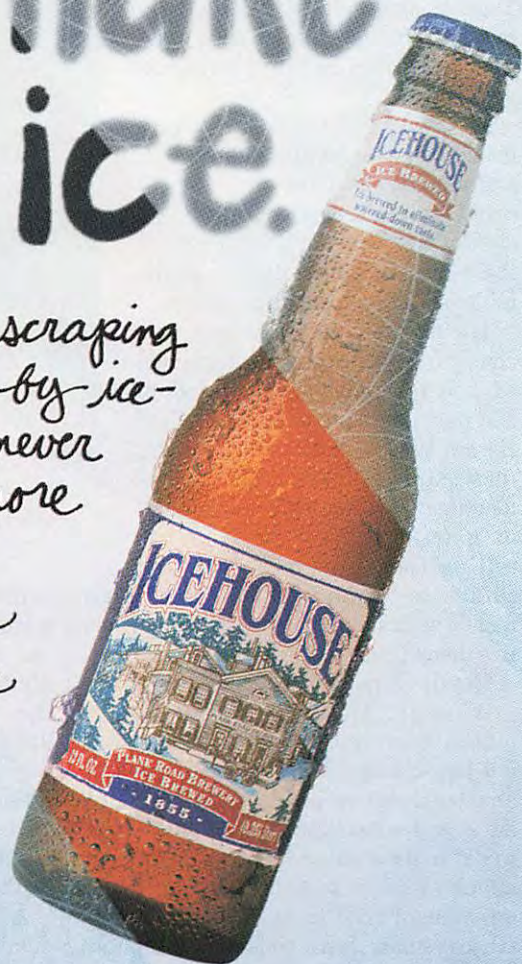
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By BOB RUBIN

Gary McCord, Unplugged

GARY MCCORD'S CRIME WAS irreverence; his sentence was banishment. The judge and jury: those merry pranksters who run the Masters golf tournament.

For comments he made on the 1994 telecast, McCord—far and away the favorite TV analyst of readers polled by golf magazines in recent years—was banned from the CBS broadcasting team assigned to cover the Masters this spring. The term of the ban is indefinite, so don't expect to hear McCord at the Masters again unless he receives a pardon. That seems unlikely, given his irreverence, impudence, cheekiness, and wit.

McCord really doesn't have a choice. He is constitutionally and chronically irreverent, impudent, cheeky, and witty. Unfortunately, those are all capital offenses to the blithe spirits who run the Masters.

The man and the event were on a collision course from the beginning of their relationship, when McCord and then-tournament chairman Hord Hardin had an introductory lunch refereed by Frank Chirkinian, a longtime coordinating producer of golf for CBS. "Hord is telling Gary how to behave and things he shouldn't do," Chirkinian recalls with a sigh, "and Gary says, 'Does this mean I can't wear my clown suit?'"

"Hord was not a McCord fan."

What did McCord say that was so offensive, so repugnant, so shocking it got him canned? We've got bare breasts and buttocks on prime time TV these days, and schoolkids use language that would make a sailor blush. Rappers and shock radio jocks constantly push the envelope of good taste. Fewer and fewer taboos remain. What could McCord possibly have said to deserve banishment?

On the Sunday of last year's tournament, McCord was broadcasting from a



Call it censorship or strictly business, but CBS' most colorful—and controversial—golf analyst no longer is working the network's Masters telecasts.

perch above the 17th hole. Referring to a ball hit by Jose Maria Olazabal that was falling down a steep embankment, McCord said, "If it rolls down any farther, it will be down there with some body bags." That simply was another way of saying, "He's dead," a cliché used often on the tour to describe a golfer whose ball is in such bad shape that he has no hope of salvaging a decent score on the hole.

A few minutes after Olazabal's demise, as Tom Lehman stood over a putt, McCord tried to describe the speed of the greens by noting: "These greens at Augusta are so

fast, I don't think they mow them—they use bikini wax."

McCord spends a lot of time researching snappy one-liners and storing them in a computer in an effort to say things in a different and amusing way. He watches Jay Leno and David Letterman, reads entertainment magazines and "bizarre books that make no sense. It keeps me busy, and you've got to keep me busy, or I can get into trouble."

He got into trouble anyway. Body bags and bikini wax did him in. The comments may seem innocuous to the rest of the world, but not to the jolly elves who run the Masters.

McCord was shocked by the ban. "I've used 'body bag' hundreds of times. Also 'tag on the toe,' 'cadaver,' and 'perdition.' The 'bikini wax' line I got out of an ad for beauty tips in *People* magazine. It talked about plucking eyebrows and hot bikini wax, and bikini wax just jumped out at me. 'Yeah, that's different,

that's weird. Let me try that.'

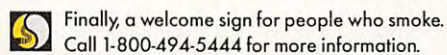
"I didn't think it would cause such a big fuss. I've heard things from other announcers on that broadcast that were far worse, but no one got reprimanded. I look back at it and still say, 'Whaaat?'"

So did the men of the Masters, but in a different context. They were so determined to get rid of McCord that they warned CBS they'd consider going to another network if CBS didn't comply. (CBS has done the Masters for 40 consecutive years, but at the shrewd insistence of tournament organizers, always on a one-year contract.) The network was reeling from the loss of its contracts with Major League Baseball and the NFL, and it hardly could risk losing the Masters, too, so it knuckled under.



A pack of Benson & Hedges 100's cigarettes, made of textured gold-colored material, with a red band at the top. A single white cigarette with a gold filter lies diagonally across the pack. The pack features the brand name 'BENSON & HEDGES' and '100's' in black lettering.

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Agreeing to keep McCord away from Augusta was a sensible business decision by CBS but hardly a profile in courage, and the network was sharply criticized for yielding to censorship.

"Nonsense," Chirkinian says. "If you're issued an edict that if you don't accede to their demands you're not going to be invited to negotiate for the yearly contract, what can you do? We'd already lost the NFL. How the hell do we go back to the affiliates and say, 'Well, on principle we won, but we lost the Masters.'"

"We had no choice. We were in a lose-lose situation. We had to put principles aside and make a pragmatic decision."

Chirkinian fought for McCord with tournament chairman Jack Stephens. "At one point I thought I had worked it out," Chirkinian says, "but subsequently the tournament's TV committee made its recommendation to ban Gary, and Mr. Stephens has a great deal of faith and trust in his committees. Gary has said that he will not change, so it does not bode well for his return to the Masters."

The veteran producer is emotionally divided on McCord vs. the Masters. Chirkinian has worked the tournament since 1959, and as a guy who once said "dogs don't bark and babies don't cry" at Augusta, he acknowledges his feelings for the tournament border on reverence.

He deems the question of the Masters' uptight attitude "irrelevant." Says Chirkinian: "They want to run their tournament their way, and who's going to argue with them? They've got the most successful tournament in the world, and they want to protect it."

In 1985, however, Chirkinian hired McCord—then an undistinguished member of the tour—precisely *because* he was attracted to his irreverence. "This is not the Second Coming," Chirkinian said then. "This is a troubled world, and anyone who treats a golf telecast as a totally serious exercise is demented."

"People with Gary's personality will rub some people the wrong way," Chirkinian says now. "There are some on the tour who don't accept him, particularly the traditionalists."

McCord sometimes rubs Chirkinian the wrong way, too. For example, there was the time he referred to a Mark O'Meara putt at Pebble Beach as "faster than a Jamaican pickpocket." Says Chirkinian, "I told him, 'You're going to have to answer every piece of mail I get on that, you SOB.'"

Asked to describe his relationship with Chirkinian, McCord says: "I'm the smart-ass kid in front of the class, and he's the

professor. I'm just there to bother him. Frank's here to keep me inside the lines. I do my best to grab the wheel and drive on the shoulder. I'm a tick on his life."

Given the situation, McCord agrees wholeheartedly with the decision by CBS to accept the ban. "I can see their position 100%, and if I was them I'd have done the same thing. No contest. We haven't got a whole lot of sports programming, and we need the Masters. I told [CBS executive] Peter Lund that if it got down to them walking because of me, I'd quit."

Still, it's tough to dismiss the blatant injustice—the downright stupidity—of banning McCord for such innocuous com-

must say this, and we must not say that. You can't believe the dos and don'ts."

Strong stuff—but Weiskopf wasn't banned. He didn't commit a capital crime. He was not irreverent.

The Masters is a wonderful tournament—beautifully run, with a great tradition and a glorious setting—but it's not the Holy Grail. It's golf, a game, entertainment. Men try to knock a ball into a hole with a stick. You should be permitted to poke fun, have a laugh.

However, the men of the Masters are not what you'd call a fun group, and they have an ally in Tom Watson, who was so bothered by McCord's comments he sent

I've used 'body bag' a hundred times. The 'bikini wax' line came from a beauty ad. I didn't think it would cause a fuss.—Gary McCord



ments. In doing so, the Masters showed itself to be stodgy, sanctimonious, priggish, imperious, self-righteous, self-important, and completely lacking a sense of humor.

What else is new? The Masters always has taken itself too seriously. In 1966, announcer Jack Whitaker was banned for five years for referring to an unruly gallery as "a mob." In fact, after McCord was banned, Whitaker called his colleague to cajole and console him.

"I told him I was mad at him—I had been the sole member of the world's most exclusive club," Whitaker says. "Then I told him not to change or to be upset, that this wasn't going to ruin his career. When it happened to me I was absolutely crushed—then, all of a sudden, I started getting all this sympathetic feedback."

So has McCord. In the wake of the ban, fellow CBS golf analyst Tom Weiskopf blasted the Masters and its organizers' rigid attempts to control what the broadcasters say. "You get a list," Weiskopf said. "We do not refer to the flowers as 'flowers.' They are 'azaleas,' they are 'rose bushes,' they are 'dogwoods,' but they can't be 'flowers.' We must use the term 'beautiful' as often as we possibly can. We

a letter to Chirkinian urging him to fire McCord. "He [McCord] is the Howard Stern of TV golf, and you should be ashamed, rather than champion his 'irreverent' behavior," Watson wrote. "Get rid of him now." In defending the letter against heavy criticism, Watson said he and his wife were offended by McCord's comments. "If the game is treated with vulgarity, golf will become vulgar," Watson said. "Maybe you don't care. I do."

McCord was offended by Watson's letter, but only because Watson didn't come to him with his criticism first. "If the guys on the tour have a problem with something I've said, they come to me and say, 'Hey, Gary, what about this?'" Tom didn't. He went to my boss and tried to get me fired. We've been out there too long together—some 20 years—for him to be so insensitive as not to come to me first.

"If he had come to me, told me what a scumbag I am, and that he was going to write my boss, I wouldn't have had a problem with that. I like Tom, but he might have gotten a little carried away. If you look at what I said, it's amazing it touched off such a flash fire. It's kind of silly."

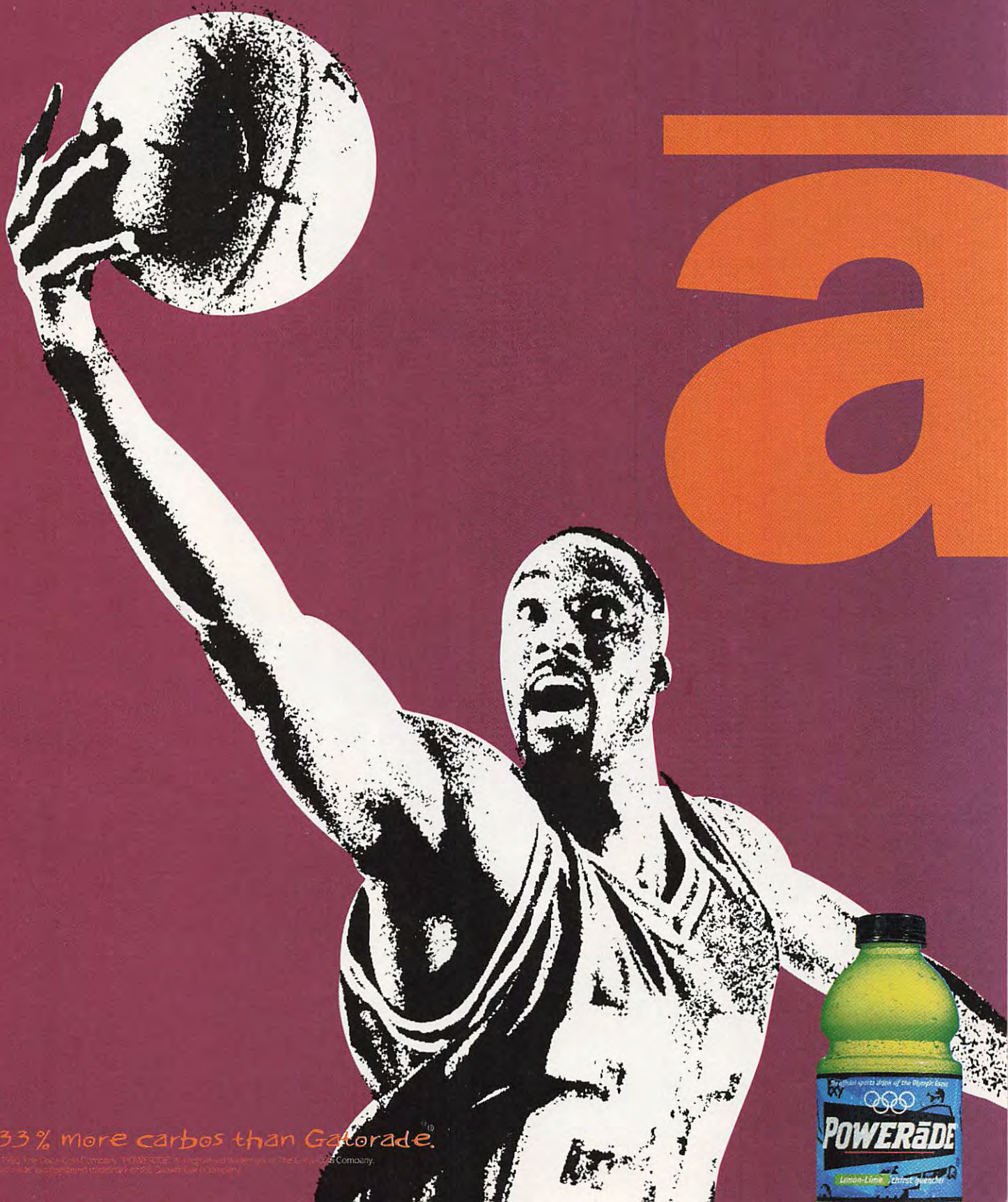
Indeed. All this over body bags and bikini wax? Lighten up, folks. ■

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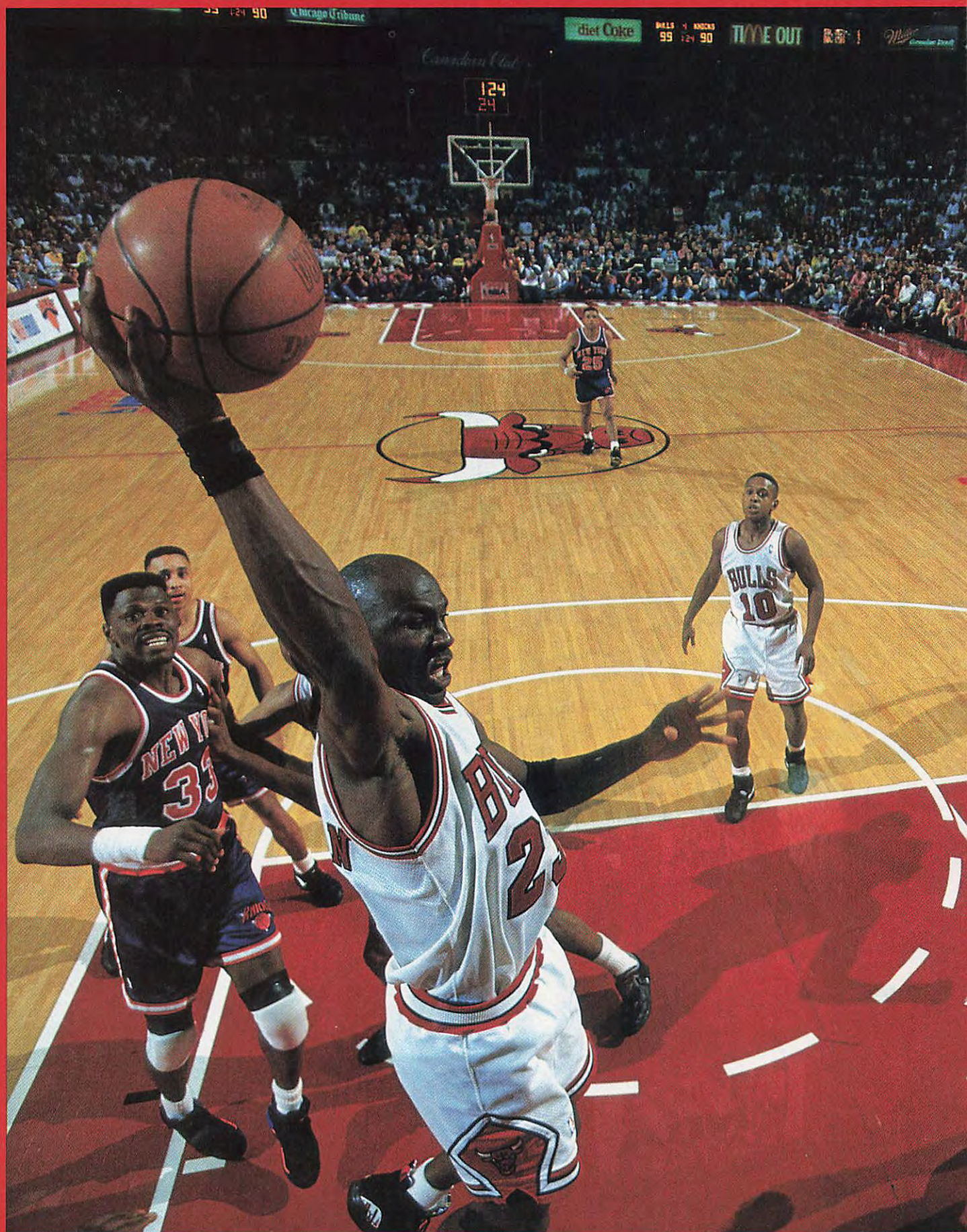


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The power of a legend



5:09

THE STUFF OF GREATNESS

The mere possibility of Michael Jordan's return to the NBA brought the world of sports to a standstill

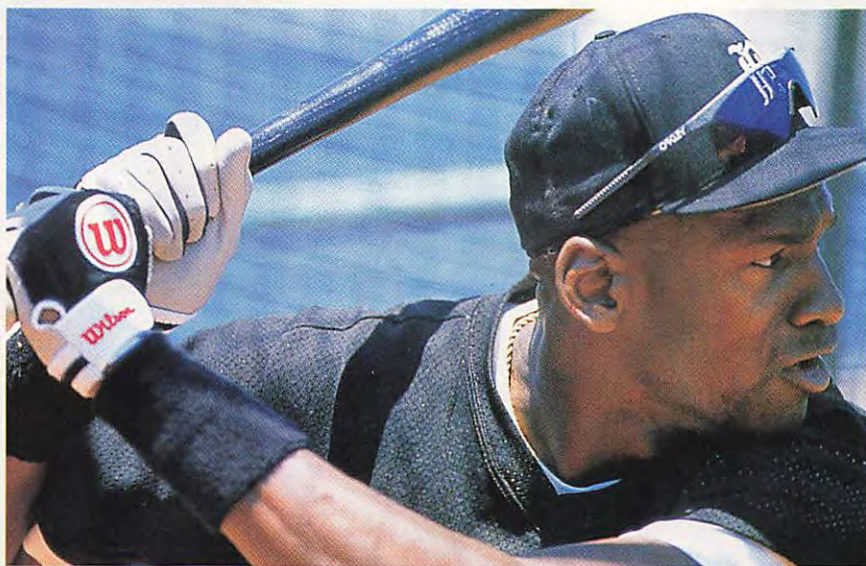
By SAM SMITH

IT TURNS OUT THEY CALLED THE WRONG basketball player "Magic." As spellbinding as were the skills that earned retired Los Angeles Lakers star Earvin Johnson his nickname, the hold Michael Jordan maintains not only on basketball fans, but on the entire world, is as magical, and as mysterious, as it is obvious. Never was this more apparent than when the rumors of his return to the Chicago Bulls arose around the second weekend in March.

Why else would seemingly normal human beings worship at the feet of the Jordan statue outside the east entrance of Chicago's new United Center, as if it were some sort of weeping icon?

Who else could have brought more than 500 people—some armed with bongos beating out haunting tunes apparently designed to woo Jordan, others simply pleading

BILL SMITH



Cover photo credit: Michael Jordan by Andrew D. Bernstein/NBA Photos

The power of a legend

Though Jordan's NBA exploits were but a memory, his omnipresent ads [below and right] kept him larger than life.

out loud—to the sidewalk outside a Chicago office building where Jordan had been spotted?

What else could make the President of the United States open a news conference on the creation of new jobs with a joke that if Jordan returned to play basketball, it would be one more job his administration had helped create?

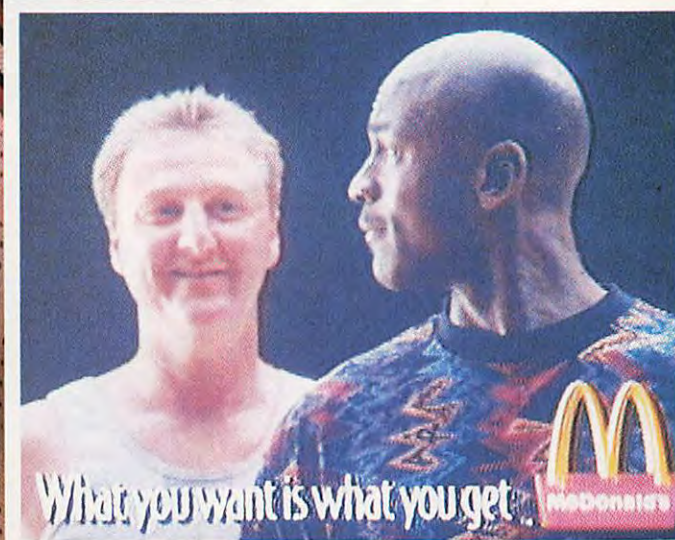
Perhaps it was no coincidence that a vigil for Jordan was occurring during the Lenten season leading to Easter. Of the anticipation surrounding Jordan's possible second coming, one Chicago columnist wrote, "If you substituted the word 'Jesus' for 'Jordan' in many of these frenzied stories, you wouldn't miss a beat."

Blasphemy? Not to sports fans. Not to millions the world over who were immediately enthralled when Jordan abandoned his fanciful attempt at a professional baseball career and returned to the Chicago Bulls' practice center to work out with the team he led to three straight NBA titles, from 1991 to 1993, before stunning almost everyone by announcing his retirement at the age of 30.

Jordan scrimmaged with the Bulls and watched game films with coach Phil Jackson. And the world all but forgot how it had had the Air knocked out of it 17 months earlier, when a great gift had been lost, apparently never to be enjoyed again. But just maybe...

The news that Jordan might return to

BILL SMITH



play for the Bulls dominated the front pages of virtually every major American newspaper, as well as those in Europe and Asia. Journalists from France, England, Greece, and Japan lit the phone lines to Chicago. He was the top story. The rest of the world became Jordan watchers once again. *O.J. who?*

Jordan somehow reduces relatively sophisticated society to the level of primitive idol-worship. He is something akin to the ancient mythical gods, who were thought to possess great healing powers. With a smile, a quick move, flight, and then consummation, Jordan could heal a

sports world fighting off boredom, could add color to routine lives marching forward in lockstep toward daily oblivion.

As it is with all great legends, belief in Jordan's powers merely grows. Certainly he could return to a mediocre Bulls team and lead them to another title. He's Michael Jordan, after all. He'll never lose. He'll save us when he has to.

From what? Bad basketball? Spoiled athletes? A soiled national pastime? Sports as soap opera? Sports as big business?

Enough already. Let's play. And who ever played better, soared higher, enjoyed it more? Jordan combined remarkable ability with resilient spirit. He has a big smile and an even bigger talent. Everyone was a kid again as they watched him.



BILL SMITH

The media crush that greeted rumors of MJ's return brought back images of the circus that accompanied his retirement.



And he flies. He has achieved man's ultimate dream: to take flight, soar and glide in the air, free and powerful. That's Jordan's gift—combined with a youthful exuberance for his game and a mature expectation of success.

An aura has surrounded Jordan from the day he exploded on the American consciousness as a freshman at the University

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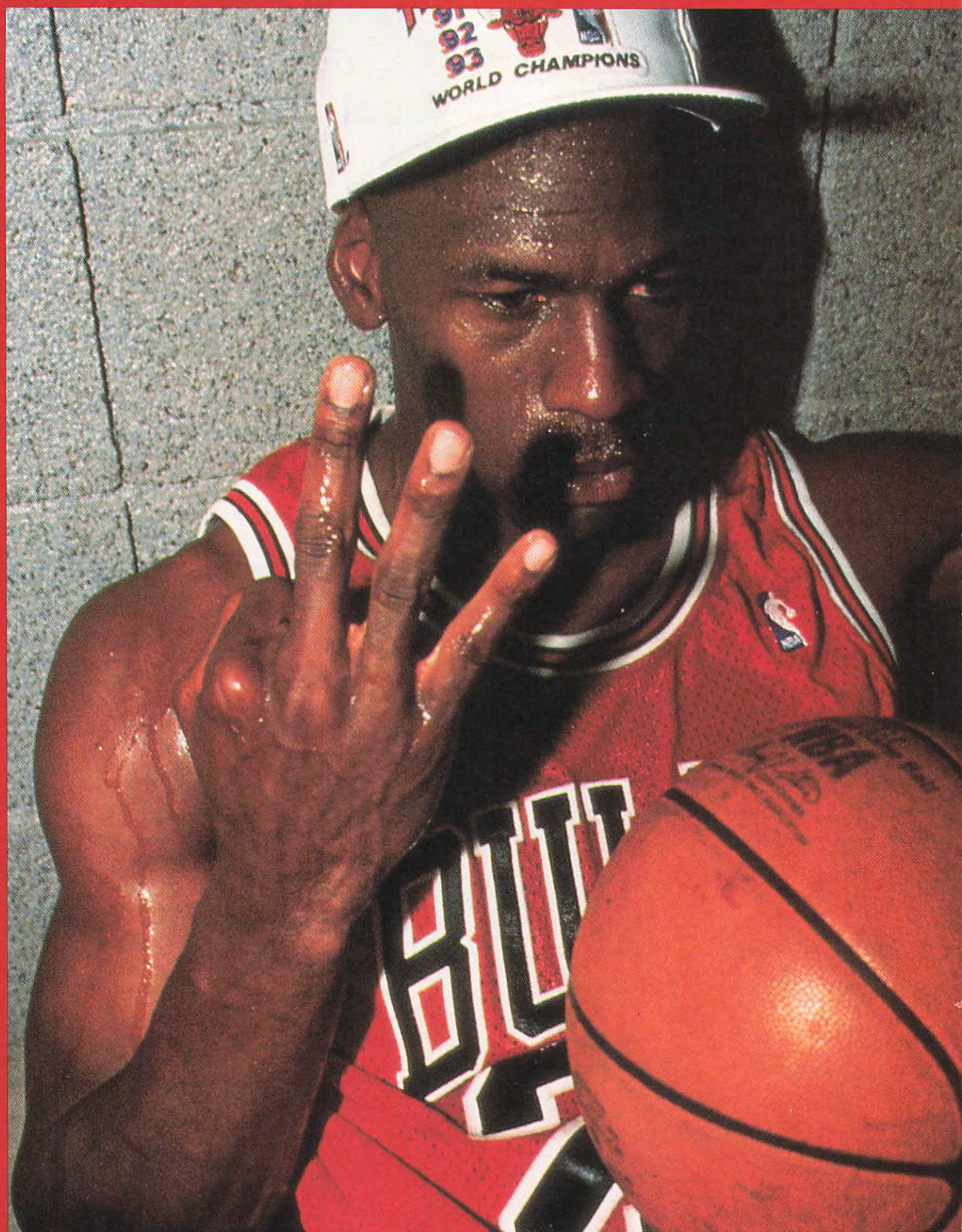


"I like to give each piece a chance."
(Carrie Bell, Student)

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The power of a legend



The Bulls' three straight titles made history. If Jordan ever takes them to another, he'll enter the realm of myth.

of North Carolina, hitting the game-winning shot in the 1982 NCAA championship game. Two-time Olympic gold medalist. Seven-time NBA scoring leader. Three-time world champion. And when he retired, he left enough highlight-film moves and moments to last a generation.

Among those moves are some questionable ones—which only adds to the myth. Ronald Reagan was called “the Teflon president” because it seemed no matter what he did people continued to embrace him. All the ugly stuff slid off.

Jordan is the Teflon star. After the Bulls won their first title, in '91, they were scheduled to go to the White House to meet President Bush. Jordan refused, saying he had promised his family a vacation. As it turned out, he was with a convicted drug dealer named Slim Boulter at a gambling party that was bankrolled by a bail bondsman who later was murdered. Jordan said a \$57,000 check he had written to Boulter was a loan, but when Boulter was tried in federal court Jordan testified under oath that check had been for gambling losses.

Still, a fourth-grade teacher wrote to a Chicago newspaper to say that a poster of Jordan urging kids to read gets results in her classroom; Jordan asking them to stay in school gets the students' attention.

Companies continue to line up at his door, hiring him to help sell their products. Jordan turned Nike into a part of the fabric of American society. Gatorade drinkers were assured they would “Be Like Mike” when they took a swig. In March he was seen coming and going from his mystery appearances at Bulls practices in a Range Rover; he endorses the Chevy Blazer—a competing product. Who questions it?

In 1990 Jordan was asked to support the U.S. Senate candidacy of a progressive black Democrat, Harvey Gantt, from his home state of North Carolina, against the imperial Jesse Helms. Jordan declined to endorse Gantt. “Republicans buy shoes, too,” he offered with an engaging smile.

While demanding privacy, Jordan continues to be a vanity plate motoring through life. He quit basketball, saying he needed the peace and quiet of home and family. Yet within months he was at baseball spring training, trying to make the major leagues in the biggest sports story in decades. His



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The power of a legend

Be very afraid: The other NBA teams learned never to underestimate Jordan's indomitable competitive fire.

baseball skills clearly were limited, but he made it to Double-A anyway—only to quit in the midst of the baseball labor dispute. Within days he was practicing with the Bulls. And a world embraced him.

"Michael is like the perfect role model," says Pippen, an often-angry Bull. "It seems everything is right about him."

In some ways Jordan is Everyman—a man's man, gambling, swapping stories, playing games for the fun of it. He's not an angry giant like Wilt Chamberlain or Shaquille O'Neal, yet he is endowed with special gifts that test both gravity and the imagination. And his return would save the NBA, certainly.

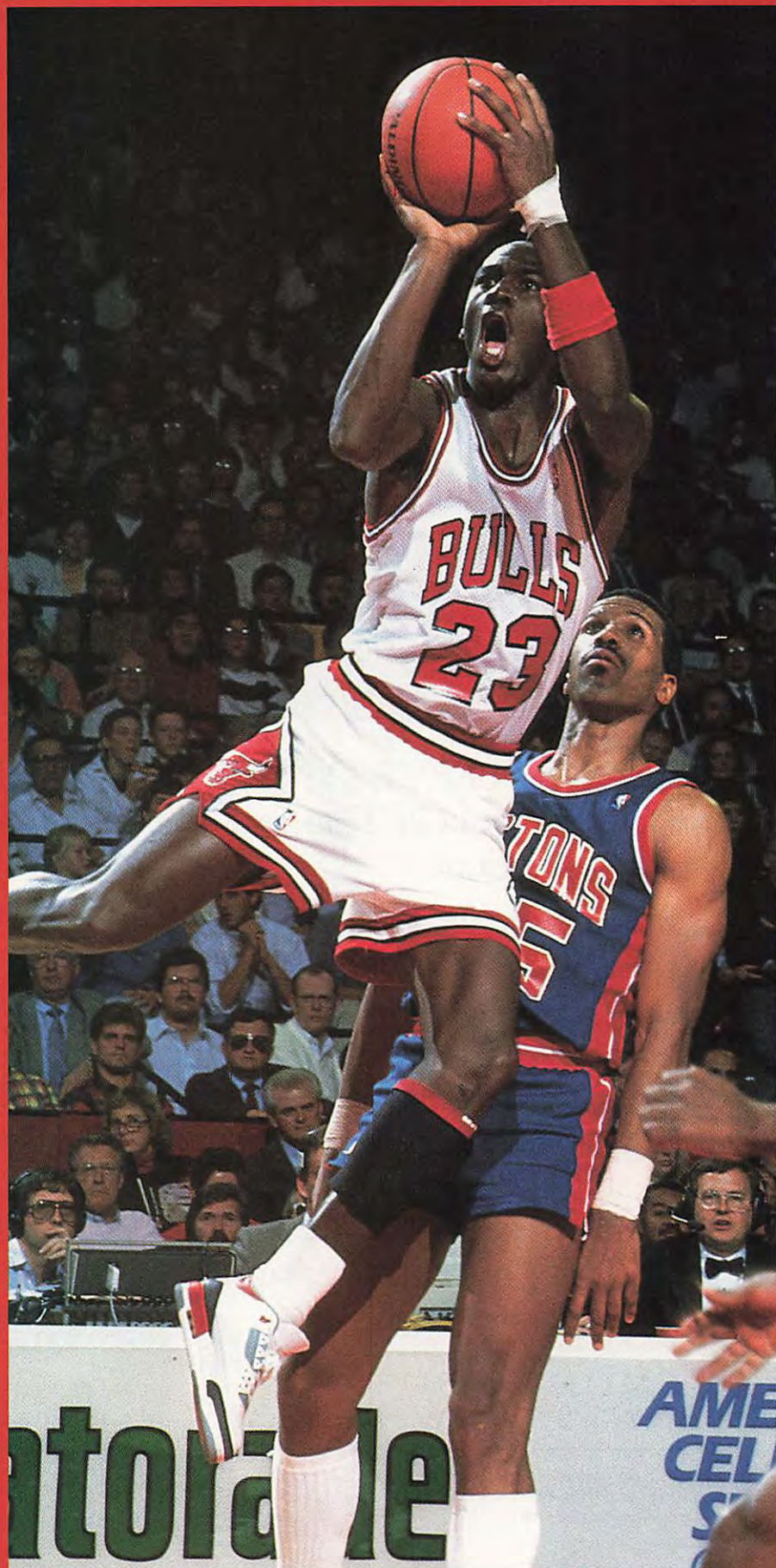
The 1993 NBA Finals, Jordan's last playoff appearance, drew better ratings than the World Series—the first time basketball's championship surpassed the showcase event of America's supposed pastime. When Jordan left basketball, so did the ratings. The NBA, the league of visionaries, suddenly became an eyesore. Spoiled, selfish players gave the game a black eye a mere patch couldn't cover.

It would take Jordan. So what if he cherry-picked to his heart's desire? A few regular-season games, then the playoffs. Forget all those other games everyone else had to play.

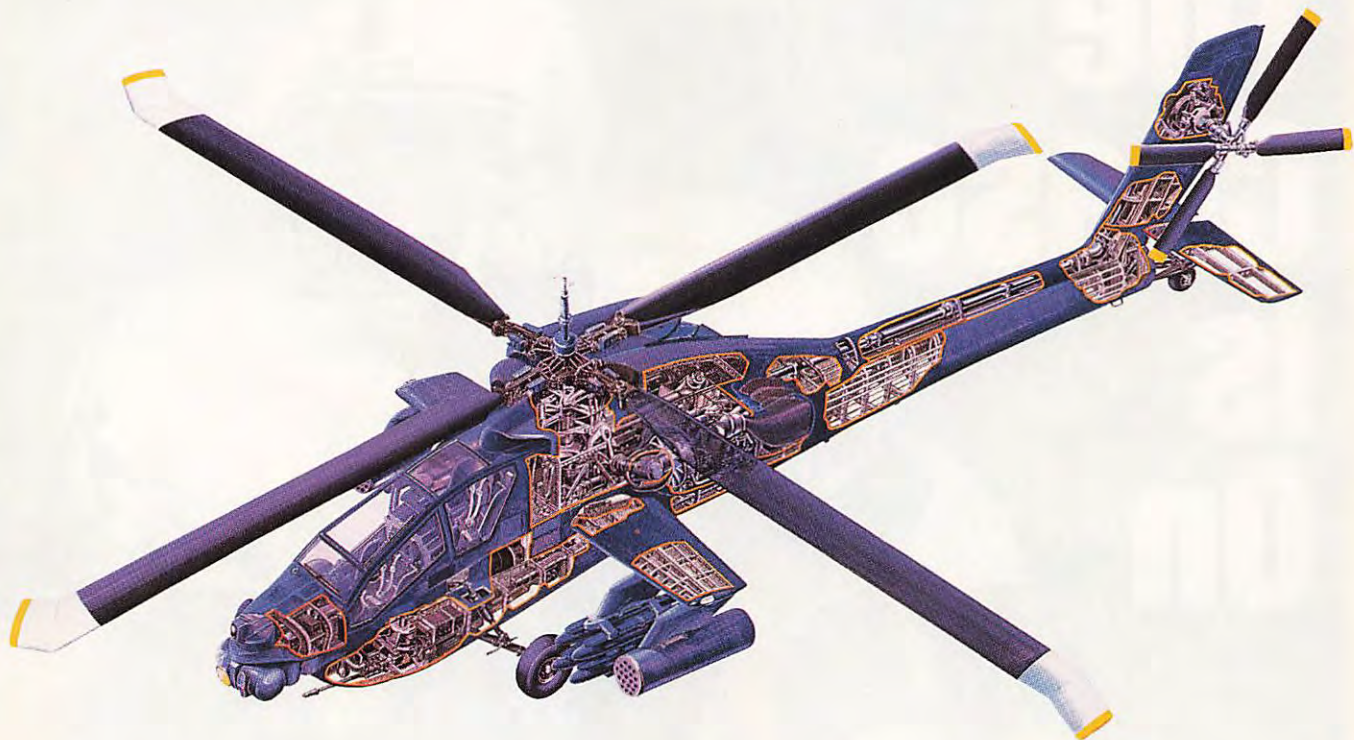
How does Jordan dominate without even playing? He's Frank Sinatra, Babe Ruth, Muhammad Ali, and Elvis all wrapped in one—the ultimate in celebrity and ability. Jordan's skills seem to range far beyond what anyone else contributed to his profession. And he was gracious and funny and charming. Sure, he could be naughty, but not enough to make anyone really mad. And didn't that just show he was human like the rest of us, capable of mistakes?

No one else could go where he did, to the other side of greatness, right out there over the horizon, where only a star can exist. No one else could play a game and provide a few hours of dreams and magic to a world too quickly spinning away from us. ■

Chicago-based sportswriter SAM SMITH is the author of the best-selling book "The Jordan Rules."



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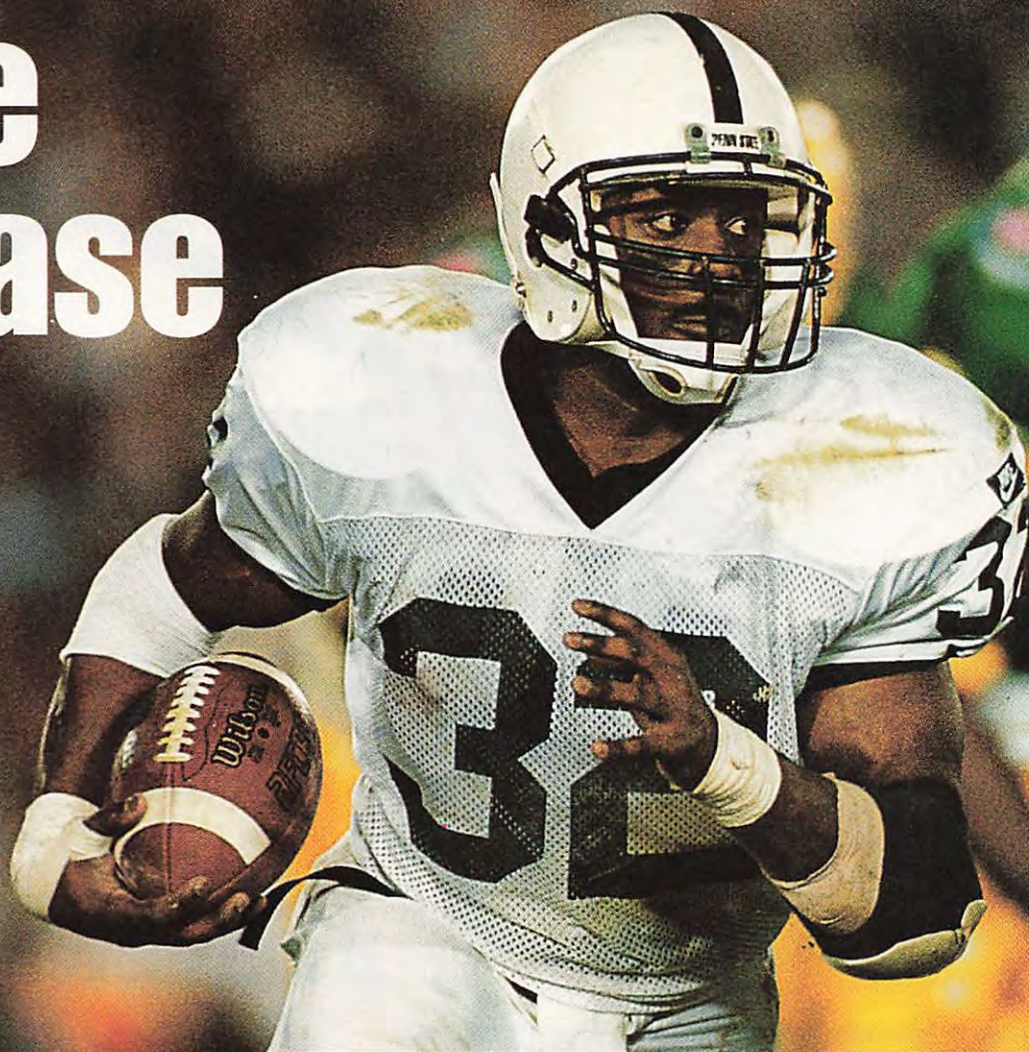
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The Chase Is On



MIKE POWELL/ALSPORT

DESPITE THE CHANGES WROUGHT by the introduction of unrestricted free agency to the NFL in 1993, the league's annual draft has lost none of its long-term impact. The biggest effect of the new system is that clubs now look at the draft differently. In the past the draft was almost the only pipeline to talent. A team tried to select wisely in what used to be a 12-round draft (it dropped to eight rounds in 1993 and seven last year) and take a look at a handful of undrafted players in training camp.

Free agency has provided teams with more ways to improve their talent base. Clubs can complement the draft by bidding on free agents during the signing period from mid-February to mid-July. As a result, teams will enter this year's draft on April 22 and 23 with a different strategy than they had prior to 1993.

Most teams usually have three or four "need" areas to address in the offseason. Nowadays they can fill at least two of those

The NFL is geared up for its annual pursuit of talented collegians, and Penn State running back Ki-Jana Carter leads the pack

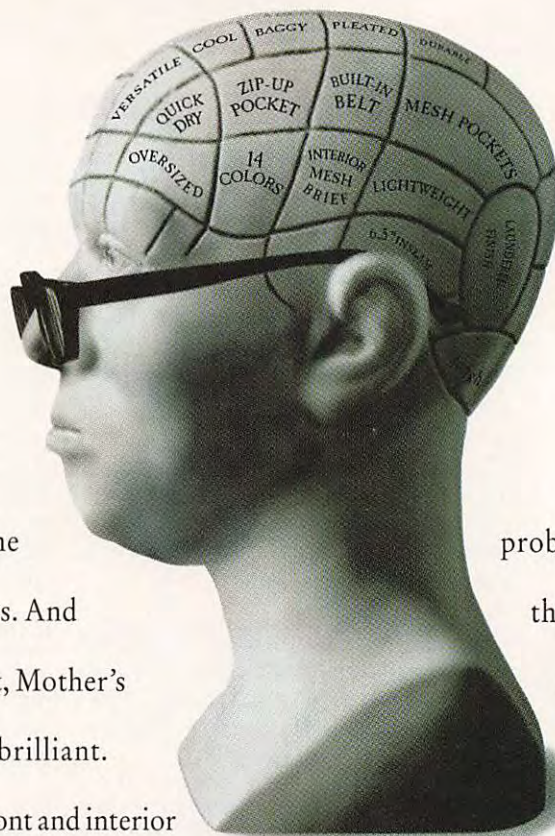
By MEL KIPER JR.

spots through free agency. That's the primary difference between the draft today and in the past: Teams now feel more comfortable drafting the best available athlete, rather than going for a player who simply might fill a need. If a club comes out of the draft still unsatisfied with its talent base, it has the option to sign more free agents. In that regard, free agency operates as a safety net, which makes some teams more inclined to take gambles in the draft.

Nevertheless, if a team doesn't draft well, it's in trouble. The San Francisco 49ers are a perfect example of the continuing importance of the draft. Contrary to what some might believe, the 49ers' long-

term success—even their short-term success—isn't a result of free agency; it's a result of astute drafting.

Some of the free agents the 49ers signed last year didn't contribute much. Defensive end Richard Dent missed most of the season because of a knee injury, and cornerback Toi Cook was a run-of-the-mill nickel back. Yes, cornerback Deion Sanders and linebackers Ken Norton and Gary Plummer were great free-agent additions, but the key ingredient for this team has been its ability to draft well. Defensive tackles Dana Stubblefield and Bryant Young were San Francisco's No. 1 picks in 1993 and '94, respectively; both became starters.



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'95 NFL Draft Preview

The Top 15

Mel Kiper rates the draft prospects (by talent, not predicted draft order):

1 Ki-Jana Carter

Running back, Penn State

Ideal blend of size (5'10", 227 pounds) and speed (has been clocked at 4.38 in the 40). Benefits from a compact body. Outstanding instinct for finding holes.

2 Warren Sapp

Defensive tackle, Miami

At 6'1" and 281, a fireplug in the middle. Has tremendous closing speed and is a fierce competitor. A collapse-the-pocket-type player.

3 J.J. Stokes

Wide receiver, UCLA

At 6'4", 217, the consummate big receiver, the type in vogue in the NFL. Great leaping ability; focal point of the offense at UCLA.

4 Kevin Carter

Defensive end, Florida

Top prospect in weak year for ends. Imposing size (6'6", 274) and amazing athletic ability. Unstoppable coming off the corner in Hula Bowl.

5 Michael Westbrook

Wide receiver, Colorado

Big (6'3", 215) and fast—ran a 4.49 at Indianapolis combine. Distinguished himself in '94 despite sharing spotlight with other Colorado stars. Dangerous in open field.

6 Tony Boselli

Offensive tackle, Southern Cal

Tremendous prospect at left tackle. A starter for entire career at USC; graded as best tackle in country every year. Worth expansion team consideration.

7 Bobby Taylor

Defensive back, Notre Dame

College safety who could match up against the NFL's big wideouts as a cornerback. Rare combination of size (6'3", 208) and speed in a corner prospect.

8 Steve McNair

Quarterback, Alcorn State

Developmental prospect; three or four years from now, could strike fear into NFL defensive coordinators. Only QB in draft with potential for greatness.

9 Joey Galloway

Wide receiver, Ohio State

Smaller (5'10", 188) than other top receivers, but has excellent speed and explodes out of cuts. Big-play receiver and gifted punt returner in college.

10 Tyrone Wheatley

Running back, Michigan

Stock down after three straight years with injuries. Has track background and ran a 4.51 at Indianapolis combine. Extremely talented; ability to stay healthy in question.

11 Kyle Brady

Tight end, Penn State

At 6'6", 258, possesses all the physical tools. Blocks like an offensive tackle and can catch. Reminds scouts of former Raiders and Oilers great Dave Casper.

12 Mike Mamula

Linebacker/DE, Boston College

Bryce Paup-type athlete. Plays well in space and can come off the corner to harass quarterback. Stock is climbing more rapidly than any other prospect.

13 Luther Elliss

Defensive tackle, Utah

Big and rangy at 6'5", 291. One of the strongest players in the college game last season. Outstanding upfield surge at point of attack; must work on technique.

14 Hugh Douglas

DE/LB, Central State (Ohio)

Stock rose when he was unblockable at Hula Bowl. Intense competitor with explosiveness in lower body. With 4.73 speed, can fly off the corner in pass rush.

15 Shawn King

Defensive end, Northeast Louisiana

Dominant in Senior Bowl, then ran an impressive 4.80 at Indianapolis combine. Played some tight end in college; has the pass-rush potential NFL teams seek.

Fullback William Floyd, another first-rounder in '94, played a vital role in last season's championship run. And Lee Woodall, a sixth-round sleeper pick from West Chester (Pa.) University, emerged as a rookie starter at outside linebacker in '94.

If a team doesn't understand the value and importance of the draft, it never will win. When people talk about the 49ers—who, given all of their young but experienced talent, will continue to be championship contenders—they have to point to the draft, not free agency, as the root of the club's success.

Regardless of the changes free agency has brought to the draft, most clubs still are locked into certain mindsets when it comes to judging talent. For instance, if you chart Bill Tobin's scouting history with the Chicago Bears, for whom he worked from 1975 through the 1992 season, he rarely drafted small-college

players. That's ironic, because the best player Tobin ever drafted, Hall of Fame running back Walter Payton in 1975, came from Division I-AA Jackson State. After that, the Bears avoided small-college players under Tobin's reign and usually went for athletes from major conferences such as the Big Ten, Southeastern, and Pacific-10.

Tobin stuck with that philosophy when he moved to the Indianapolis Colts last year. Now that free agency has arrived Tobin has the freedom to take chances in the draft on players from small colleges, but he used all of his '94 picks on players from major schools. Tobin's selections came from San Diego State (Marshall Faulk), Nebraska (Trev Alberts), California (Eric Mahlum), Texas A&M (Jason Mathews and Lance Teichelman), Southern California (Bradford Banta), Notre Dame (John Covington), and Colorado (Lamont Warren).

The point is that free agency hasn't

prompted front-office personnel to change their basic value systems. The elements they deem important in the draft process have remained the same.

The salary cap instituted last year, which now stands at \$36.5 million, has spurred clubs to try to find productive players in the later rounds, since those players command less money than the higher picks. It's especially important to draft players in the later rounds who not only can be effective as backups and on special teams, but also can fill a starting role in the event of injuries.

Woodall is an example; nobody expected he'd be a starter when training camp opened. Other teams have had similar success with late-round picks. Guard Anthony Redmon, a '94 fifth-rounder from Auburn, was a good choice for the Arizona Cardinals. He earned a starting role as a rookie. Sixth-rounder Andrew Jordan from

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Western Carolina worked out well for the Minnesota Vikings, emerging as their starting tight end.

Quarterback Perry Klein, from C.W. Post (N.Y.), was a great '94 fourth-round selection for Atlanta. The Falcons really like Klein's potential, and with a fourth-round-er's salary—Atlanta paid him \$173,000 last year—there's no immediate pressure on him as there is on Washington's Heath Shuler (the third pick in the '94 draft) and Tampa Bay's Trent Dilfer (the sixth pick in '94). The Falcons can let Klein sit behind starter Jeff George and give him time to develop. That's the best way to bring along a quarterback.

The NFL's salary cap prevents team owners from making the mistakes their counterparts in other sports have made. For example, New York Yankees owner George Steinbrenner did a good job building his team in the 1970s, but then he threw big dollars at free agents who didn't pan out. He went for the quick fix. That can't happen in the NFL, because the salary cap is a built-in protection for owners who might be willing to spend wildly in their lust for Super Bowl glory.

Teams that get too involved in free agency and don't do their homework

regarding long-term goals are destined to struggle. They might win for a year or two, but they won't be successful over the long haul. Teams that don't place a tremendous amount of importance on the draft are virtually certain to have an early first-round pick annually.

Buffalo Bills

State of the team: The Bills must rebuild from top to bottom, and with Jim Kelly showing signs of wear after playing 11 seasons of pro football, the way to start rebuilding is to draft a quarterback early. With the 14th pick in the first round, the Bills should consider Penn State quarterback Kerry Collins. If Buffalo wants to wait until the second or third round for a QB, New Mexico's Stoney Case is a promising prospect.

The team's most glaring weakness is its defensive line. Northeast Louisiana end Shawn King or Utah tackle Luther Elliss would make sense if the Bills decide to use their first pick on a defensive lineman.

Behind the scenes: The draft is in the hands of general manager John Butler, who did a good job as director of player personnel under former GM Bill Polian. The Bills have been stuck near the end of the first

'95 NFL Draft

round for a while, yet they have been able to find solid contributors such as linebacker Marvyn Patton (eighth round, 1990), defensive end Phil Hansen (second round, '91), and linebacker Mark Maddox (ninth round, '91).

Indianapolis Colts

State of the team: The Colts are set on defense; they need players who can help them score. Indianapolis can't rely so much on Marshall Faulk's running, and the team never will be more than mediocre with Jim Harbaugh at quarterback. The Colts' best move would be to address the QB situation through free agency or a trade and go for a wide receiver in the draft. With the 15th pick, there's a chance they can get Ohio State's Joey Galloway, who would be a tremendous complement to Sean Dawkins.

Behind the scenes: Last year, in his first draft for the Colts, Bill Tobin unnecessarily moved up two spots to the No. 5 position to take linebacker Trev Alberts. He could have gotten Fresno State quarterback Trent Dilfer with that No. 5 pick and been set for years at the position. In addition, Tobin continued the trend he showed previously as head of the Chicago Bears' draft team by steering clear of small-college players.

Miami Dolphins

State of the team: The Dolphins have a good blend of youth and experience, but to get to the Super Bowl soon they must locate a competent pass-rusher. Their options with the 25th pick include defensive ends Dameian Jeffries of Alabama and Hugh Douglas of Central State (Ohio).

Behind the scenes: Tom Heckert, who joined the Dolphins in 1989 and became the team's director of player personnel in '92, has beefed up the personnel department. Before he arrived the Dolphins had been struggling with the draft, but in recent years they have taken some gambles that have paid off. Last year Miami selected defensive tackle Tim Bowens, who didn't get a lot of playing time at Mississippi yet became the NFL defensive rookie of the year.

New England Patriots

State of the team: The arrival of coach Bill Parcells and quarterback Drew Bledsoe has transformed the Patriots. Believe it: New England could be the AFC representative in the next Super Bowl. If the Patriots hope to make it there, they must find a defensive tackle; Parcells real-

Preview

ly likes South Carolina State's Anthony Cook. Marion Butts was a disappointment last season, so New England also could use a running back. Parcells might go the free-agent route to fill that need.

Behind the scenes: We know Parcells can coach a Super Bowl team; we don't know whether he can build one. When he was coaching the New York Giants from 1983 through '90 he didn't have total control over the draft. Parcells tends to fall in love with certain players, as he showed with last year's selection of Southern Cal linebacker Willie McGinest, who was nothing spectacular.

New York Jets

State of the team: The Jets need help on the offensive line and at defensive end. With the ninth pick in the first round, they probably can get Derrick Alexander, a defensive end from Florida State. He'd be a significant upgrade at that position. If they go after a guard in the second round, Kevin Mays of Tennessee and Matt O'Dwyer of Northwestern are possibilities.

Behind the scenes: General manager Dick Steinberg's health problems will reduce his involvement in the draft, and consequently new coach Rich Kotite will have the final word in personnel decisions. That's a new role for Kotite, who didn't have that power in his four seasons as coach of the Philadelphia Eagles.

Central Cincinnati Bengals

State of the team: Considering that running back Harold Green appears to be on the slide, Cincinnati might try to move up from the No. 5 pick to get Penn State's Ki-Jana Carter. If they remain at No. 5, the Bengals probably will take Southern Cal offensive tackle Tony Boselli.

Behind the scenes: People criticize the Bengals because they don't have a well-stocked personnel department, but they've gotten by. Unlike other NFL teams, Cincinnati expects its assistant coaches to do the scouting and make the final draft decisions.

Cleveland Browns

State of the team: Quarterback Vinny Testaverde remains more a question than an answer, and he has no established backup—problems the Browns should address in the first round. Selecting 26th, Cleveland can consider Southern Cal's Rob Johnson, Brigham Young's John Walsh, and Kansas State's Chad May.

Behind the scenes:

Under Ernie Accorsi's leadership the Browns drafted running backs Eric Metcalf (1989) and Leroy Hoard ('90), wide receiver Michael Jackson ('91), and safety Eric Turner ('91). After two drafts, the jury still is out on Mike Lombardi, Accorsi's successor as head of Cleveland's draft team.

Houston Oilers

State of the team: The Oilers will attempt to rebuild from the top: at quarterback. Drafting third, they've got their eyes on Alcorn State's Steve McNair, a potential franchise player. There isn't another quarterback of McNair's caliber in the draft, so don't be surprised if the Oilers trade up to No. 1 to ensure they get their man.

Behind the scenes: The Oilers' success in the '80s and early '90s was a reflection of the talent Mike Holovak brought in. General manager Floyd Reese

First-Round Draft Order

- | | |
|------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 Carolina Panthers | 15 Indianapolis Colts |
| 2 Jacksonville Jaguars | 16 Arizona Cardinals |
| 3 Houston Oilers | 17 New York Giants |
| 4 Washington Redskins | 18 Los Angeles Raiders |
| 5 Cincinnati Bengals | 19 Kansas City Chiefs |
| 6 St. Louis Rams | 20 Detroit Lions |
| 7 Tampa Bay Buccaneers | 21 Chicago Bears |
| 8 Seattle Seahawks | 22 Green Bay Packers |
| 9 New York Jets | 23 New England Patriots |
| 10 Atlanta Falcons | 24 Minnesota Vikings |
| 11 Minnesota Vikings* | 25 Miami Dolphins |
| 12 Philadelphia Eagles | 26 Cleveland Browns |
| 13 New Orleans Saints | 27 Pittsburgh Steelers |
| 14 Buffalo Bills | 28 Dallas Cowboys |
| | 29 San Diego Chargers |
| | 30 San Francisco 49ers |
| | 31 Jacksonville Jaguars |
| | 32 Carolina Panthers |

* From Denver Broncos, through Atlanta Falcons.

took over the draft in 1994, and his track record includes last year's first-round pick Henry Ford, a bust at defensive end.

Jacksonville Jaguars

State of the team: As coach and general manager, Tom Coughlin is running the show. His move with the second pick depends on what happens at No. 1. The Jaguars will take the best player available,



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'95 NFL Draft Preview

The Next

Mel Kiper rates the draft prospects (by talent, not predicted draft order):

16 Derrick Alexander Defensive end, Florida State

One of the top defensive underclassmen in the draft. Had tremendous season as junior in '94. Versatile enough to play either tackle or end.

17 Reuben Brown Offensive tackle/guard, Pittsburgh

With Pitt on wrong end of many blowouts, had down periods in '94. Awesome when challenged at Senior Bowl. Quick feet, good balance in pass protection.

18 Rashaan Salaam Running back, Colorado

Real scrutiny began after Heisman vote. Running style is upright; hasn't been in great shape since end of season—but don't overlook game-breaking potential.

19 Anthony Cook Defensive tackle, S.C. State

At 6'3", 293, a natural pass-rusher. Uses hands and arms to great advantage in gaining leverage. Spent a lot of time in opposing team's backfield.

20 Kerry Collins Quarterback, Penn State

Hitch in delivery drew scrutiny in Senior Bowl, where stock dropped. Big-league arm, leadership skills, height (6'5") to see entire field. Definitely can make it in NFL.

21 Ellis Johnson Defensive tackle, Florida

Not flashy, but consistent and technically sound. Had an outstanding '94 season. Excels on every snap. A potentially productive and steady NFL player.

22 Korey Stringer Offensive tackle, Ohio State

Stock dropped after arriving at Indianapolis combine out of shape at 345 pounds. Great ability, can be as good as he wants to be—but weight problems are a concern.

23 Tyrone Poole Cornerback, Fort Valley State (Ga.)

Had superb '94 season in and stepped up in all-star games. Ran a 4.51 at Indianapolis combine. NFL coaches compare him with longtime Redskins star Darrell Green.

24 Blake Brockermeyer Offensive tackle, Texas

Enters NFL as underclassman but is as experienced as most seniors. Rarely allowed defensive linemen penetration while at Texas. Can play guard.

25 Jimmy Hitchcock Cornerback, North Carolina

Highly skilled cover man who broke arm in scrimmage last August and played in cast for part of season. Might have been the top-rated corner if not for injury.

26 Cory Raymer Center, Wisconsin

Didn't start playing center until college, but set Big Ten standard for the position. Had great '94 season for otherwise disappointing team.

27 John Walsh Quarterback, Brigham Young

Excellent short- to medium-range passer. Has the arm strength and size (6'3", 214) for the NFL; mobility is the big question. On first-round bubble.

28 Matt O'Dwyer Guard, Northwestern

Played tackle at various stages in college; moved to guard last season with great success. Probably the most intense offensive lineman in draft.

29 Ty Law Cornerback, Michigan

Three-year starter for the Wolverines; one of the more experienced cornerbacks in the country. The most fundamentally sound corner in the draft.

30 Eric Zeier Quarterback, Georgia

Intelligent kid who gambled by skipping all-star games and putting everything into Indianapolis combine. Was most accurate passer there; now has scouts raving.

most likely Penn State running back Ki-Jana Carter or University of Miami defensive tackle Warren Sapp. Free agency could make the Jaguars competitive in three to four years, instead of the five to six years it used to take for an expansion team to get up to speed.

Pittsburgh Steelers

State of the team: This team is in great shape on defense. On the other side of the ball, is quarterback Neil O'Donnell good enough? Probably—but if the Steelers decide to bolster themselves at the position, Brigham Young's John Walsh might be available with the 27th pick. Pittsburgh could use more depth on the offensive line and would be wise to spend its first pick on one of these tackles: Barrett Brooks of Kansas State or Brian DeMarco of Michigan State.

Behind the scenes: Director of football operations Tom Donahoe has done a

fine job in recent years as the point man for Pittsburgh's draft team. The Steelers have selected well defensively, landing players such as cornerback Deon Figures in 1993 and safety Darren Perry, an eighth-round steal in 1992.

Denver Broncos

State of the team: Unless he plans on John Elway lasting into the next century, new Broncos coach Mike Shanahan should consider initiating the development of a young quarterback. Denver's major weakness, though, is at cornerback, and both lines could use upgrading. But the Broncos don't pick until the fourth round, so the free-agent market is Denver's primary focus.

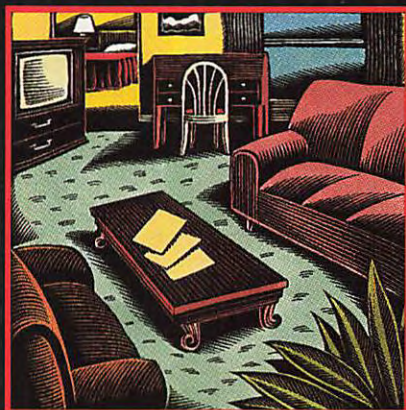
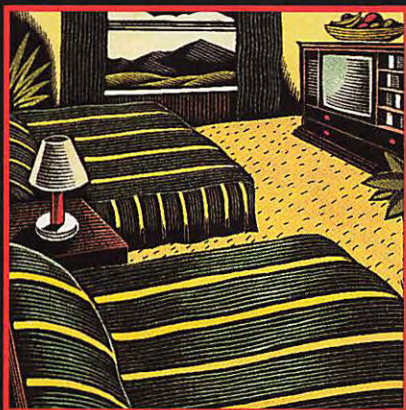
Behind the scenes: The Broncos' recent drafts have been mediocre. Shanahan will have a large say in the draft—a new situation for him, since he

didn't have input concerning personnel decisions in his short stint as coach of the Los Angeles Raiders, or as offensive coordinator of the San Francisco 49ers.

Kansas City Chiefs

State of the team: On offense, the Chiefs have questions at quarterback, running back, wide receiver, and the line—that is, almost everywhere. Defensively, the line and the secondary need help. Given their many needs, and that their drafting position is No. 19, the Chiefs will take the best player available. Possibilities include defensive tackle Ellis Johnson of Florida, cornerback Jimmy Hitchcock of North Carolina, and offensive tackle Blake Brockermeyer of Texas.

Behind the scenes: General manager Carl Peterson controls the draft room, but coach Marty Schottenheimer has a say in personnel decisions. They've done a good job, especially in locating talented players



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'95 NFL Draft Preview

Kiper's Most Underrated Players

Offense

1 Stoney Case

Quarterback, New Mexico

Multidimensional player with an adequate arm and decent mobility. Great quarterback smarts.

2 Joe Aska

Running back, Central Oklahoma

In an elite class in terms of size-to-speed ratio: a 5'10", 230-pounder who was clocked at 4.42 in the 40 at Indianapolis.

3 Len Raney

Running back, Northern Arizona

A third-down pass receiving threat, and also a good return man.

4 Byron Chamberlain

Wide receiver, Wayne (Neb.) State

Outstanding performance in Hula Bowl, where he was uncoverable, might have pushed him up into second round.

5 Ray Forsythe

Offensive tackle, Central Florida

Workout warrior with an imposing 6'3", 314-pound frame. Needs to improve technically to succeed in NFL.

Defense

1 Eric Fontenot

Defensive tackle, Grambling State

Tremendous quickness off the snap. Wasn't invited to Indianapolis combine, but well worth a look by NFL teams.

2 Bryan Schwartz

Linebacker, Augustana (S.D.)

Played inside in college, moved to outside in Senior Bowl. Has requisite size (6'3", 256) and speed (4.81).

3 Cedric Davis

Cornerback, Tennessee State

Among fastest players at Indianapolis combine (4.42). Fluid backpedal. Could become some team's third-round steal.

4 Ray McElroy

Cornerback, Eastern Illinois

Teams avoided his side of the field in college. Good size (6'0", 196) for a cornerback.

5 Darryl Pounds

Safety, Nicholls State (La.)

Can play inside despite 5'10", 175-pound stature. Plays bigger than his size; hits hard and is instinctive.

beyond the first round—among them wide-out Lake Dawson (third round in 1994), guard Will Shields (third round, '93), and center Tim Grunhard (second round, '90).

Los Angeles Raiders

State of the team: The Raiders aren't happy with right tackle Robert Jenkins; Michigan State's Brian DeMarco would be a good alternative. The team still is looking for a replacement for tight end Ethan Horton, a 1994 free-agent defector. An interesting possibility is Lovell Pinkney, who was a wide-out at Texas. He's the type of player the Raiders like to gamble on: He's big (6'4", 248 pounds), and he ran into some off-field problems in college.

Behind the scenes: Owner Al Davis runs the show—one reason few coaches are thrilled by the prospect of roaming the sideline in L.A. Davis makes most of the calls on draft day, and his first-round history is to go for massive defensive linemen.

San Diego Chargers

State of the team: San Diego went to the Super Bowl but still needs a lot of help. This team needs to bolster its offense, particularly at wide receiver. Don't be surprised if Chargers GM Bobby Beathard trades up into the top 10 to acquire either UCLA's J.J. Stokes or Colorado's Michael Westbrook. If he stays at No. 29, Beathard might go for a sleeper such as Byron Chamberlain from Wayne State in Nebraska, who had 83 receptions for 926 yards last season.

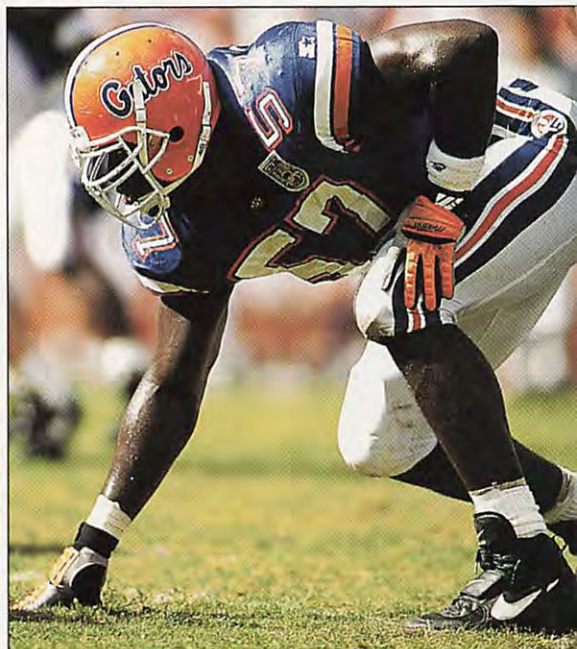
Behind the scenes: Beathard probably has the best-stocked personnel department in the league. The Chargers don't hesitate to gamble or make moves, and they're willing to give up the following year's draft choices to get the players they want for the current year.

Seattle Seahawks

State of the team: Like the San Diego Chargers, the Seahawks desperately need wide receivers; Brian Blades is a quality wideout, but the team has no one to complement him. Seattle lost the coin toss with Tampa Bay, but it still hopes to get one of the top two receivers—UCLA's J.J. Stokes and Colorado's Michael Westbrook—with the eighth pick.

Behind the scenes: Player personnel director Mike Allman directs the Sea-

hawks draft, and new coach Dennis Erickson, fresh from the University of Miami, will play a strong role. Erickson should be familiar with much of the talent in the next few drafts, and given Seattle's weak recent draft record—spending a No.



Mann-ley duty: Kevin Carter could be the guy to fill the Redskins' pass-rushing void.

1 on quarterback Dan McGwire in 1991 set the team back big-time—that will help.

East

Arizona Cardinals

State of the team: Buddy Ryan's defense is solid—as usual—but his offense ranked 25th last season. The Cardinals' biggest holes are at quarterback and wide receiver, but drafting 16th, Ryan likely won't be able to address those areas in the first round; Joey Galloway of Ohio State, the third-best receiver in the draft, probably will be gone, and after him the quality drops significantly. Arizona's best bet is with a defensive player: cornerback Tyrone Poole of Fort Valley State. The Cards need a complement to Pro Bowl corner Aeneas Williams, and Poole's stock soared at the Indianapolis combine.

Behind the scenes: Ryan, who runs Arizona's draft, says he can judge the quality of a prospect by looking him in the eye. He, Bill Walsh, and Jimmy Johnson stand far above other recent NFL coaches in terms of evaluating talent.

Dallas Cowboys

State of the team: The Cowboys aren't as dominant as they were two years ago,

and there is no way Dallas can sign all its veterans this offseason and stay under the salary cap. Offensive line and cornerback are the areas the Cowboys will attempt to address in the draft. With the 28th pick, they should consider Tennessee guard Kevin Mays and Michigan State offensive tackle Brian DeMarco. If they opt for a corner, Arizona State's Craig Newsome would be a solid addition. He's not exceptionally fast but has excellent skills.

Behind the scenes: Director of college and pro scouting Larry Lacewell heads the draft team, but owner Jerry Jones and coach Barry Switzer have a lot of input. The Cowboys' moves in the first year without master draft manipulator Jimmy Johnson were inconsistent: They unnecessarily traded up for defensive end Shante Carver; made a great pick in offensive lineman Larry Allen, a second-round gamble; then failed in the third and fourth rounds with offensive tackle George Hegamin, wide receiver Willie Jackson, and linebacker Dewayne Dotson. This team misses Johnson's draft savvy.

New York Giants

State of the team: To get to the next level the Giants must become bolder in free agency and the draft. New York needs help on both lines, but defense probably will be the focus in the first round. Possibilities with the 17th pick include defensive ends Luther Elliss of Utah, Mike

Mamula of Boston College, and Hugh Douglas of Central State in Ohio. Douglas also can play linebacker.

Behind the scenes: The draft responsibility falls primarily on Giants director of player personnel Tom Boisture, GM

team has to become more aggressive in pursuing players.

Philadelphia Eagles

State of the team: Among the numerous question marks on this team is the uncertain status of quarterback Randall Cunningham. If the Eagles use the draft to acquire a quarterback, Penn State's Kerry Collins would be a nice addition. More likely, Philly will go after top-rated tight end Kyle Brady of Penn State with the No. 12 pick. He'd be a perfect replacement for aging Mark Bavaro.

Behind the scenes: Philly has misfired on some recent early-round choices, and now vice president of player personnel John Wooten must bring in new players for spots he thought he had filled. Although the Eagles hit the jackpot last year with first-round offensive tackle Bernard Williams, second-round defensive tackle Bruce Walker was a complete bust. Other recent draft-day mistakes include defensive tackle Leonard Renfro, a 1993 first-rounder, and offensive tackle Antone Davis, a first-rounder in '91.

Washington Redskins

State of the team: Where *don't* the Redskins need help? After a 1,000-yard rookie season in 1993, running back Reggie Brooks slumped badly last year. The Redskins gave up on wide receiver Desmond Howard, leaving him exposed in the expansion draft, where Jacksonville



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'95 NFL Draft Preview

Underclass Rankings

Mel Kiper's rundown on the underclassmen who declared themselves eligible for the 1995 NFL draft:

Pro Bowl Potential

Ki-Jana Carter RB Penn State
Mike Mamula DE Boston College
Warren Sapp DT Miami
Bobby Taylor DB Notre Dame

Solid Starters

Derrick Alexander DE Florida State
Blake Brockermeyer OT Texas
Devin Bush S Florida State
Shannon Clavette DT Colorado
Jack Jackson WR Florida
Trezelle Jenkins OT Michigan
Ty Law CB Michigan
Lovell Pinkney WR Texas
Craig Powell LB Ohio State
Brian Robinson S Auburn
Rashaan Salaam RB Colorado
James Stewart RB Miami
Korey Stringer OT Ohio State
Lorenzo Styles LB Ohio State
John Walsh QB Brigham Young

Should Have Stayed in School

Toney Bates DE Iowa
Greg Black DE North Carolina
Lee DeRamus WR Wisconsin
Brian Easter LB Arizona State
Brian Fitzgerald RB N.C. State
Elliott Fortune DT Georgia Tech
Che Foster RB Michigan
Proffail Grier RB Utah State
Brandell Jackson RB Baylor
Curtis Johnson RB North Carolina
Greg Landry G Boston College
Johnny Thomas WR Arizona State

took a flier on the 1991 Heisman Trophy winner. And Washington hasn't had a dominant defensive end since Dexter Manley and Charles Mann in the late '80s. The Skins probably will select Florida's Kevin Carter, the best defensive end in the draft, with the No. 4 pick. But don't be surprised if they go for one of the top receivers: J.J. Stokes of UCLA or Michael Westbrook of Colorado.

Behind the scenes: With all the turnover at the top—Charlie Casserly replaced Bobby Beathard as GM in 1989,

and the Redskins have had three head coaches in the past three seasons—Washington hasn't established any continuity in its draft plans in recent years.

Central

Chicago Bears

State of the team: Coach Dave Wannstedt has upgraded the team's talent since coming to town in '93. The chief need is for a big-time running back, and there's a chance Rashaan Salaam of Colorado or Tyrone Wheatley of Michigan will slip to Chicago's position at No. 21. If those two are gone, the Bears will consider James Stewart of Miami, Sherman Williams of Alabama, or Napoleon Kaufman of Washington. The offensive line also could use a boost, and Texas offensive tackle Blake Brockermeyer would help if Chicago goes that way.

Behind the scenes: Wannstedt calls the shots in the draft, and he's beginning to get a feel for things. Curtis Conway, the Bears' No. 1 pick in 1993, still is trying to distinguish himself, and John Thierry, last year's top selection, has yet to adjust to playing defensive end in the NFL after playing linebacker at Alcorn State.

Detroit Lions

State of the team: The Scott Mitchell debacle—an \$11 million contract for a guy who in his first season in Detroit was less productive than aging Dave Krieg—shook this team; now the Lions must

rethink its quarterback situation. Cornerback is among the many other questions, and that's where the Lions are likely to focus with the 20th pick. Among the candidates: Jimmy Hitchcock of North Carolina and Tyrone Poole of Fort Valley State.

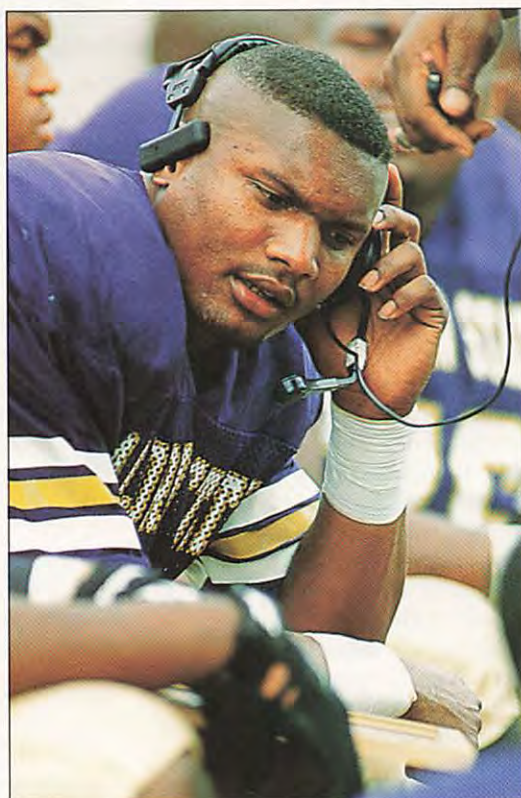
Behind the scenes: Director of player personnel Ron Hughes handles the draft, but coach Wayne Fontes has a say in decisions. The Lions haven't had an integrated plan for the draft and free agency, and

that's led to shaky personnel decisions. Despite some good draft moves—linebacker Chris Spielman in 1988, running back Barry Sanders in '89—Detroit hasn't been able to bring in enough talent to get over the top.

Green Bay Packers

State of the team: The injury to All-Pro wide receiver Sterling Sharpe and his subsequent release has left this team with a gaping hole at wideout. But that's just one of the numerous need areas; tight end and running back are among the additional pressing concerns. Colorado running back Rashaan Salaam or Ohio State wideout Joey Galloway would help, but neither is likely to be around at Green Bay's No. 22 spot. Cornerback? Defensive lineman? The Pack needs plenty for a team that came within one win of playing for the NFC championship, and the draft won't provide all of the answers.

Behind the scenes: General manager



If McNair somehow drops to their spot, the Vikings won't hesitate to ring him up.

Ron Wolf is a solid talent evaluator; he proved as much by helping to construct some of the great Raiders teams of the 1970s and '80s. The Packers have made some decent draft selections in recent years, including running back Edgar

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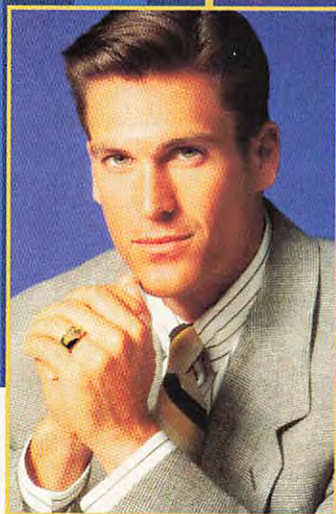
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Last but Not Least

MUCH MONEY AND ATTENTION is lavished on the No. 1 pick in the NFL draft, but the last player selected also occupies a special place in football lore. Here's the lowdown on the final selection in each of the past four NFL drafts:

1994: The Positivist

Two hundred and twenty-one players were selected in the 1994 draft before Marty Moore, a University of Kentucky linebacker, heard his name called. When the season began, more than a few of those 221 were looking for work outside football. Moore, however, was in the starting lineup for the New England Patriots. He had made the roster, and an injury to Todd Collins pressed him into service.

"I had to listen to some people say, 'You're not going to make the team because you're the last guy picked,'" Moore says. "It kind of made me mad. I was determined to make it. I was out to prove them wrong." Mission accomplished.

1993: The Optimist

The Tampa Bay Buccaneers made kicker Daron Alcorn the final selection in '93. The third-leading scorer in University of Akron history, Alcorn failed in tryouts with the Bucs and later with the Chicago Bears, but he hasn't given up. "I'm allowing myself four years to make it," he says. The Vancouver, Wash., resident works at a frozen-food storage warehouse through the early afternoon, then goes to his old high school to practice his kicking. Alcorn hopes to play in Europe this spring in the revived World League.

Against the University of Toledo in

1992 Alcorn kicked a 56-yard field goal on the final play to give the Zips a 23-20 victory. The kick serves as his inspiration. "That's what keeps me going," he says. "I take the tape out and see the celebration. I want to make it happen in an NFL game."

1992: The Expansionist

Matt Elliott, the 12th-round pick of the Super Bowl-champion Washington Redskins in '92, became the first final choice to make an NFL team since cornerback Norman Jefferson made the Green Bay Packers in 1987. Elliott played on the offensive line in all 16 games for Washington in 1992, starting in two.

In '93 he tore left knee ligaments in training camp and spent the season on injured reserve. Released prior to last season, Elliott sandwiched a job at a cable access channel in Ashburn, Va., around a conditioning program geared toward giving him another shot at football. Last fall he was in the first group of players who tried out for the expansion Carolina Panthers. Elliott since has been signed by the Panthers, and he can't wait to suit up again. "The great thing about playing for an expansion team," he says, "is everyone is going to start with a clean slate."

1991: The Realist

Larry Wanke, a record-setting passer at Division III John Carroll, was one of six quarterbacks in camp for the New York Giants in 1991. He was released before the season started, and instead of trying to coax anything more out of his football career, Wanke returned to school to complete his degree and coach part-time as a student assistant. He now manages real estate investments and works as director of drug testing for Insight Research Systems, a private investigation firm in Cleveland.

"To be honest, football did not impassion me like it did when I was younger," he says. "But I will get to tell my kids and my grandchildren that I was drafted by a Super Bowl-champion football team."

—Dennis Georgatos

Bennett in 1992 and linebacker Wayne Simmons in '93, but their talent supply is running dry.

Minnesota Vikings

State of the team: The Vikings can't expect Warren Moon to play at a top level

much longer, so they'll probably use the first of their two opening-round picks, No. 11, on a quarterback. Penn State's Kerry Collins may be the choice, but if Alcorn State's Steve McNair—the wild card in this year's draft—slides that far, he'd be their man. With the 24th pick, the Vikes will

concentrate on defense. Minnesota took a hit when defensive tackle Henry Thomas signed with Detroit as a free agent; Florida tackle Ellis Johnson would plug that hole.

Behind the scenes: Coach Dennis Green has a lot of influence in the draft, but assistant GM Jerry Reichow, who's been with the Vikings since 1966, is the man who makes Minnesota's personnel department hum. He is an astute talent evaluator, especially mid- to late-round material.

Tampa Bay Buccaneers

State of the team: The Bucs signed Alvin Harper to bolster their receiving corps, but 1994 No. 1 pick Trent Dilfer can't succeed at quarterback without a solid offensive line. Ohio State offensive tackle Korey Stringer went to the Indianapolis combine at 345 pounds and has dropped in scouts' eyes; watch out for Pitt's Reuben Brown and Blake Brockermeyer of Texas. If Tampa Bay wants to address its defensive needs—cornerback and the line—the top available players probably would be Notre Dame defensive back Bobby Taylor and Utah defensive tackle Luther Elliss.

Behind the scenes: Vice president of football administration Richard McKay runs the draft. Tampa Bay consistently gets players with potential, but many end up fulfilling it elsewhere; the Buccaneers are the only team to draft two quarterbacks (Doug Williams and Steve Young) who won Super Bowls elsewhere.

Atlanta Falcons

State of the team: Neither Pierce Holt nor Chris Doleman did much to improve a defense that hasn't ranked better than 24th since 1990, so Atlanta is seeking defensive help with the 10th pick. Notre Dame's Bobby Taylor would bolster the secondary; Florida State end Derrick Alexander would strengthen the front wall; Hugh Douglas of Central State (Ohio) would boost the linebackers corps.

Behind the scenes: How long do personnel people stay in an organization when the head coaches come and go? Atlanta fired coach Jerry Glanville and kept vice president of player personnel Ken Herock after the '93 season, but under June Jones in '94 the Falcons improved only from 6-10 to 7-9. Sooner or later you must determine whether the players Herock has brought in are good enough.

Carolina Panthers

State of the team: Panthers GM Bill

Polian was the architect of the Buffalo Bills' Super Bowl teams, and his experience will help Carolina build quickly. The Panthers have many options with the first overall pick. They can take the best player, Penn State running back Ki-Jana Carter; take the best defensive player, Miami tackle Warren Sapp; or trade the 1 spot. The Cincinnati Bengals covet Carter, and Carolina's best bet might be to swap its No. 1 for Cincinnati's No. 5 pick and others. Choosing fifth, Carolina still could acquire the type of player to build a franchise around: Southern Cal offensive tackle Tony Boselli.

New Orleans Saints

State of the team: After Pro Bowler William Roaf, the Saints are awfully thin on the offensive line, and they'd be best served by someone with the versatility to play either tackle or guard. Pittsburgh's Reuben Brown can do just that, and New Orleans would be wise to take him with the 13th pick. Secondary is another concern, and Notre Dame cornerback/safety Bobby Taylor would bring a lot of speed and athletic ability to a backfield that lacks both.

Behind the scenes: The Saints have

gone from having one of the NFL's top front-office executives in the late Jim Finks to making do with people who previously never had leadership roles in acquiring personnel. It made a difference in 1994 in both the draft and free agency.

St. Louis Rams

State of the team: New coach Rich Brooks has a club riddled with holes. Last year, under pressure to win, former coach Chuck Knox pushed for the quick fix by signing free-agent quarterback Chris Miller instead of drafting Trent Dilfer. Now the Rams must re-examine their QB position. Additional questions exist on both lines and at wide receiver. With the sixth pick, the Rams should take UCLA wide receiver J.J. Stokes, who could be a difference-maker.

Behind the scenes: The Rams generally have been sound in the draft under director of player personnel John Becker. When judging players, Becker is into measurables: size, speed, strength, workouts. Brooks won't be under the gun like Knox was last year, so the Rams can approach the draft with a long-term perspective.

San Francisco 49ers

State of the team: The 49ers have an awesome array of talent and a penchant for maintaining that level. The primary goal for this draft is fine-tuning on the offensive line. Guards Kevin Mays of Tennessee, Steve Ingram of Maryland, Matt O'Dwyer of Northwestern, and Brenden Stai of Nebraska might be available at No. 30, or the Niners might consider Wisconsin's Cory Raymer, the best center in a weak crop.

Behind the scenes: Director of college scouting Vinny Cerrato, coordinator of football operations Dwight Clark, president Carmen Policy, and coach George Seifert comprise San Francisco's draft team. Cerrato and Clark have played major roles in recent drafts, pushing for defensive tackle Dana Stubblefield in 1993 and defensive tackle Bryant Young and running back William Floyd last year. All three became starters and instant contributors. ■

MEL KIPER JR. is ESPN's chief draft analyst and the publisher of Draft Publications Inc. He worked with associate editor WILL WAGNER in preparing this article.

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Randall Cunningham - \$40
John Elway - \$45
Marshall Faulk - \$35
Brett Favre - \$35
Barry Foster - \$35
Michael Irvin - \$45
Jim Kelly - \$40
Howie Long - \$35
Ronnie Lott - \$35
Dan Marino - \$45
Rick Mirer - \$35
Joe Montana - \$60
Warren Moon - \$40
Walter Payton - \$45
Jerry Rice - \$45
Barry Sanders - \$45
Deion Sanders - \$40
Junior Seau - \$35

Baseball

Sterling Sharpe - \$45
Phil Simms - \$35
O.J. Simpson - \$100
Emmitt Smith - \$45
Roger Staubach - \$50
Lawrence Taylor - \$45
Derrick Thomas - \$35
Reggie White - \$35
Rod Woodson - \$35
Steve Young - \$45
Barry Bonds - \$45
Will Clark - \$35
Joe Dimaggio - \$150
Lenny Dykstra - \$35
Juan Gonzalez - \$35
Ken Griffey Jr. - \$45
Mickey Mantle - \$95
Don Mattingly - \$50
Mike Piazza - \$35
Cal Ripken Jr. - \$50
Nolan Ryan - \$55
Ryne Sandberg - \$45
Frank Thomas - \$45
Ted Williams - \$95

Basketball

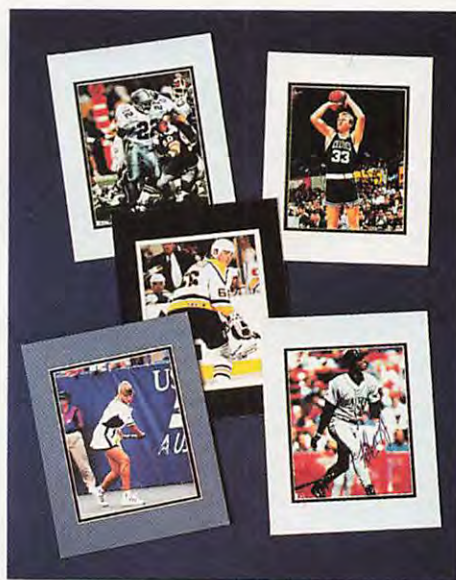
Charles Barkley - \$60
Larry Bird - \$70
Clyde Drexler - \$40
Patrick Ewing - \$45
Anfernee Hardaway - \$40
Larry Johnson - \$45
Magic Johnson - \$95
Michael Jordan - \$150
Shawn Kemp - \$40
Christian Laettner - \$40
Karl Malone - \$40
Jamal Mashburn - \$35
Reggie Miller - \$40
Alonzo Mourning - \$40
Chris Mullin - \$35
Hakeem Olajuwon - \$40
Shaquille O'Neal - \$95
Scottie Pippen - \$40
Mark Price - \$35
David Robinson - \$40
Glen Robinson - \$40
Latrell Sprewell - \$35
John Starks - \$35
John Stockton - \$35
Chris Webber - \$40

Hockey & Tennis

Pavel Bure - \$35
Jimmy Connors - \$75
Steffi Graf - \$40
Wayne Gretzky - \$55
Brett Hull - \$45
Brian Leetch - \$35
Mario Lemieux - \$45
Eric Lindros - \$40
John McEnroe - \$40
Mark Messier - \$40
Mannon Rheume - \$35
Jeremy Roenick - \$35
Patrick Roy - \$35
Gabriella Sabatini - \$40

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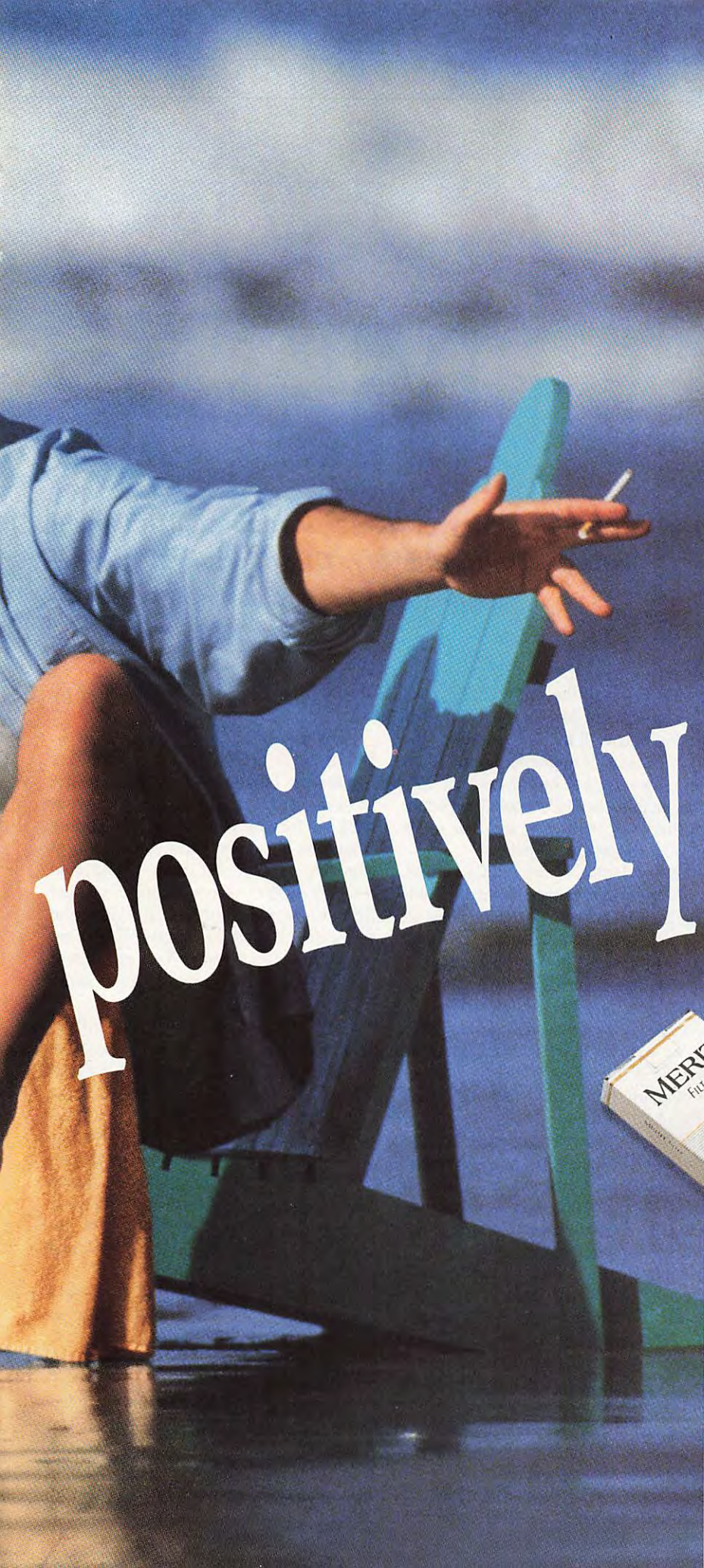
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At press time, Michael Jordan had retired from baseball but had not yet committed to returning to the NBA. INSIDE SPORTS asked Doug Collins to factor Jordan's return into his preview of the NBA playoffs.

Mike and the Magic

The big story: Michael Jordan's anticipated return. The real story: Orlando's first playoff win—and first NBA championship
By DOUG COLLINS

AT THE ALL-STAR BREAK, NO fewer than eight teams were capable of an 1995 NBA Finals berth. Michael Jordan's return would make the number grow by one. That's the immediate impact Jordan's return would have on the Chicago Bulls, and on the league as a whole. His comeback would place the Bulls alongside the Orlando Magic, Charlotte Hornets, Indiana Pacers, and New York Knicks as Eastern Conference contenders for the title.

Although Jordan's return would add an enormously intriguing element to the playoff mix, I believe that in the end Orlando will emerge from the East, and that the Magic will defeat the San Antonio Spurs in the Finals. The Bulls simply have too many unanswered questions.

It boggles the mind to think that after not having played NBA basketball for nearly two years, one man could jump back onto the court and single-handedly carry his team into title contention. While we shouldn't expect him to be the Michael of five years ago, there's no question Jordan would make the Bulls a much better team for the playoffs. He can defend. He can shoot from the outside. He can post up. He commands double-team coverage. Perhaps most importantly, the guy loves a challenge—and this would be the biggest one he has faced on the basketball court.

Jordan's impact would be as much psychological as physical. The Bulls would believe they can win a title. Chicago's greatest weaknesses this season has been the lack of a killer instinct and the inability to execute in close games. Time and again the Bulls carried substantial leads into the second half, only to allow opponents to get back into the contest—and unlike in the past, they were unable to come up with the clutch baskets down the stretch. Simply put, the heroics weren't there. With Michael around, the Bulls would know they're capable of winning the tight games—in fact, they'll expect to win them.

Don't think these mind games won't have an effect on New York and Orlando. With Jordan leading the show, the Bulls

had their way with the Knicks in the past. And even without Michael, Chicago has given the Magic all they can handle in the regular season. If opposing teams allow themselves to get caught up in this Michaelmania, the Bulls would be a better team than they really are, and that spells trouble for the rest of the field.

Even with Jordan, center Bill Cartwright, and power forward Horace Grant, the Bulls struggled to win their last championship, in '93. Now Grant is in Orlando, Cartwright is in Seattle, and Chicago hasn't found a suitable replacement for either. As a result, the Bulls simply don't have the inside toughness to beat the Knicks or the Magic, with or without Jordan. Plus, Michael hasn't faced this level of athletic competition in nearly two years. Is his body ready for the playoff wars?

The West is as up for grabs as the East. With the right matchups, any one of four teams—the Spurs, Phoenix Suns, Seattle SuperSonics, or Utah Jazz—could make the Finals. Keep a close eye on the fourth and fifth seeds in each conference. These four clubs will be in difficult spots: In the first round they'll face teams with similar records and talent levels. And whoever comes out of those tussles most likely will face a No. 1 seed. In a group this closely bunched, the seedings will have a lot to say about the winner.

This much is certain, though: With Jordan around, the postseason would be a whole lot more interesting.

Here is my take on the playoff field:

THE EASTERN CONFERENCE

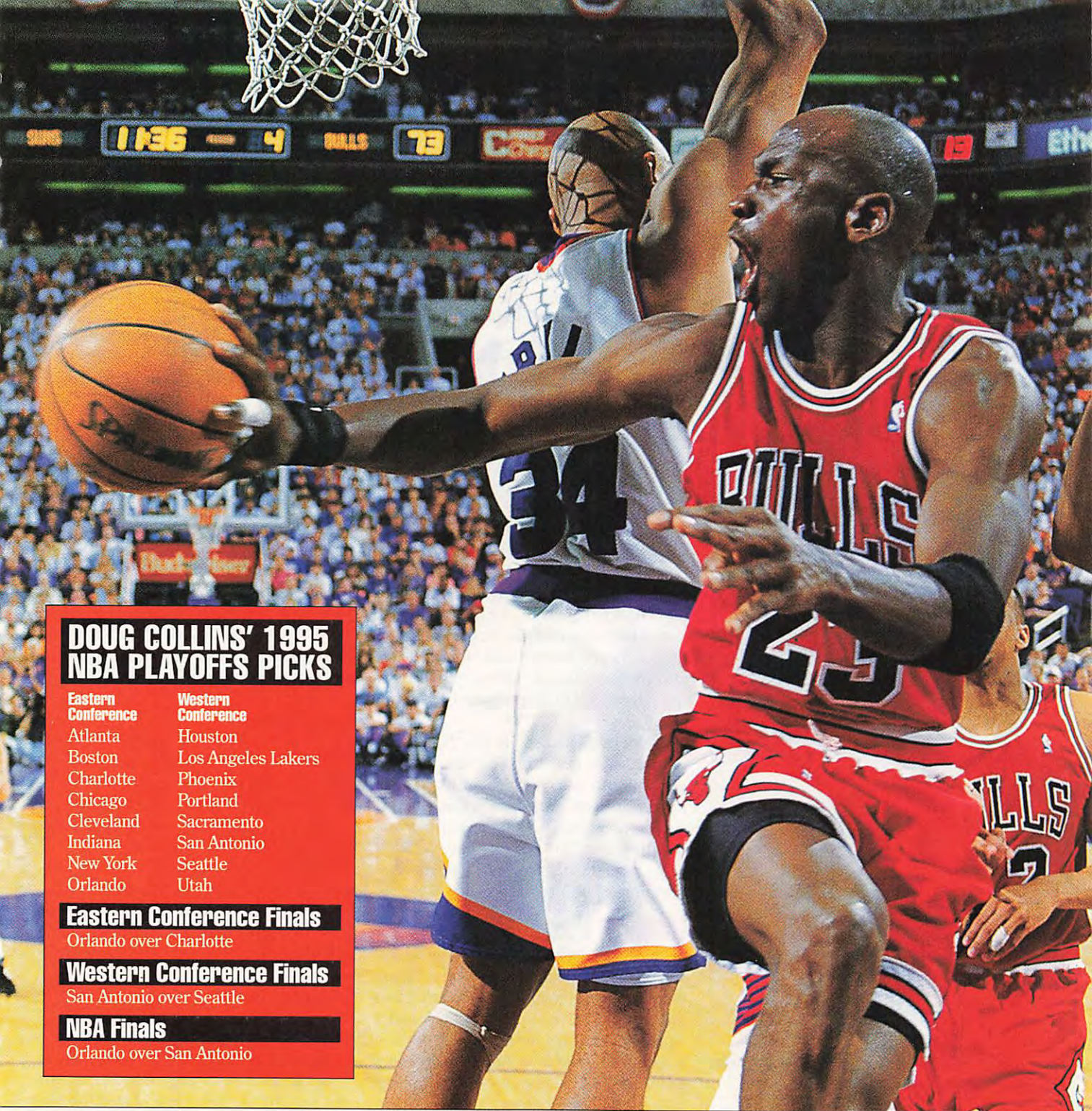
Orlando Magic

Overview: This is the best team in the Eastern Conference. Anfernee Hardaway, Nick Anderson, Donald Royal, Horace Grant, and Shaquille O'Neal form the most complete starting unit in the league, and reserves Anthony Bowie, Dennis Scott, and Brian Shaw provide flexibility. What the Magic don't have is size off the bench. That means that Grant and O'Neal must be at the top of their games and must avoid injury and foul trouble.

Without question, the Magic will be under more pressure than any other playoff contender. Hardaway will feel it. Grant will feel it. Shaq will feel it. Coach Brian Hill will feel it. There is talk that an early postseason exit could cost Hill his job, which I find a bit ridiculous given his performance. Yet the minute the Magic signed Grant as a free agent last summer, expectations soared. It will be interesting to see how this team of predominantly young players deals with such pressure.

Beware of: Physical teams that rely on a power game, such as the Indiana Pacers and New York Knicks. The deliberate style of the Cleveland Cavaliers also could frustrate Orlando.

X factors: Free throw shooting and playoff experience—or the lack thereof. The leaguewide game plan has been to lean on Shaq, wear him down, and force him to the line, where he shoots less than 60%. His



DOUG COLLINS' 1995 NBA PLAYOFFS PICKS

Eastern Conference

Atlanta
Boston
Charlotte
Chicago
Cleveland
Indiana
New York
Orlando

Western Conference

Houston
Los Angeles Lakers
Phoenix
Portland
Sacramento
San Antonio
Seattle
Utah

Eastern Conference Finals

Orlando over Charlotte

Western Conference Finals

San Antonio over Seattle

NBA Finals

Orlando over San Antonio

teammates aren't much better: The Magic shoot less than 70% on free throws. In addition, this franchise has yet to win a playoff game. Can it make the quantum leap to an NBA title? We say yes.

Unsung hero: Dennis Scott. After an injury-plagued early career, he has become the three-point threat the Magic need in order to counter collapsing defenses, of which Shaq will see plenty in the playoffs. When Scott shoots well, the Magic are much more effective.

Bottom line: Anything less than a berth in the NBA Finals would be a disappointment.

Charlotte Hornets

Overview: The Hornets have adopted a style more conducive to playoff success than they've played previously. This team is undersized at virtually every position and has only one legitimate shot-blocker in Alonzo Mourning; in order to combat those deficiencies, defensive mastermind John Bach convinced coach Allan Bristow to slow the tempo. That enables the Hornets to recover better on defense, and as a result they're run out of the building far less frequently than in previous years.

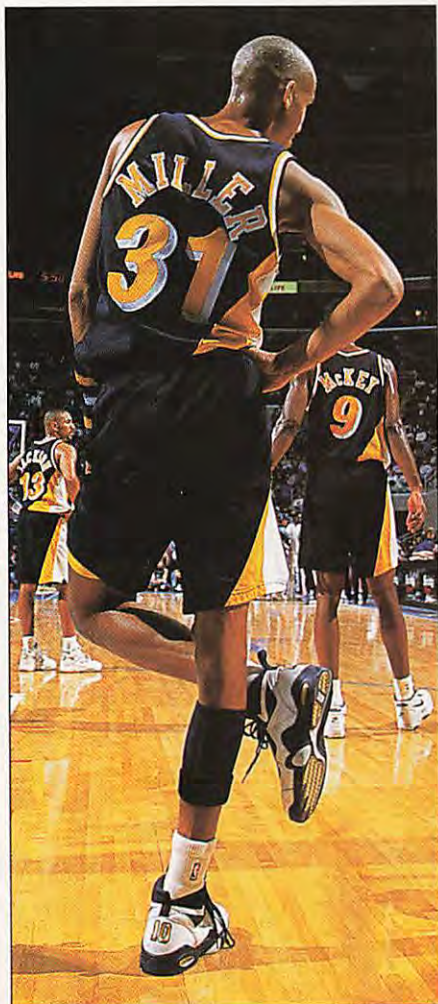
On offense, few teams boast a compara-

ble arsenal. Mourning and Larry Johnson can be counted on for 40 or more points between them on any given night; Scott Burrell, Dell Curry, and Hersey Hawkins can fill it up from the outside; and no other NBA point guard can match Muggsy Bogues' assist-to-turnover ratio of nearly 6-to-1 this season. The question is whether Charlotte can defend and rebound well enough to advance deep into the playoffs.

Beware of: Size. If you can handle Johnson and Mourning without constant double-team pressure, you'll limit the number of good looks at the basket the outside

shooters get. Conversely Charlotte's speed and quickness bother grind-it-out teams such as the Knicks.

X factor: Robert Parish. If the Chief has anything left at age 41, the Hornets can go with a bigger front line of Johnson and Mourning at their more natural positions of small forward and power forward, respectively, and Parish at center. That could be a



Miller's Pacers got off on the wrong foot but may be ready for a playoff stand.

plus, particularly in the final quarter.

Unsung hero: Burrell. His development has given the Hornets an athletic, 6'7" small forward who can defend and shoot from long range. The revised three-point line has helped turn him into one of the most improved players in the league.

Bottom line: In a given series this team is dangerous, but the feeling here is that the Hornets lack the proven power forward necessary to challenge for the title.

New York Knicks

Overview: It's not unreasonable to consider the Knicks the conference favorite. Pat

Riley's team remains a veteran, playoff-polished group, although rookie Monty Williams has given them some minutes at small forward. And few teams rebound and play defense as intensely and effectively. Last year the Knicks expended a good deal of energy in the regular season in an attempt to improve their playoff position. This year they figure to enter the postseason in better shape physically. Patrick Ewing sat out the preseason, and Charles Oakley missed two months because of an injury, so expect them to have fresher legs. The health and energy of the front line is crucial to this team's championship hopes.

Beware of: Opponents who can space the floor effectively. Ewing, Oakley, and Charles Smith lack the lateral quickness to cover effectively much beyond the paint. Teams that move the ball quickly and shoot consistently from the 18- to 22-foot range give the Knicks fits. On the other hand, this bunch feasts on opponents who try to match them bump for bump.

X factor: Perimeter shooting. When John Starks, Derek Harper, and Hubert Davis turn cold, the Knicks can't beat anybody. If those three are in rhythm, the Knicks can win it all.

Unsung hero: Harper. He was New York's most valuable player in the Finals last season. This guy is a clutch shooter, and at 33 he remains one of the best defensive point guards in the league. He's vital to this team.

Bottom line: The Knicks have what it takes to go the distance, but given the age of their nucleus, the future is now.

Indiana Pacers

Overview: Injuries have been a big reason why we've seen only flashes of the Pacers team that came within one victory of an NBA Finals berth in 1994. Indiana had a decided advantage in terms of depth last season, but injuries to Antonio Davis and Dale Davis have limited the Pacers' options on the front line this year.

Nevertheless, this team cannot be written off. The Pacers have an experienced nucleus and an accomplished coach in Larry Brown. They rebound at both ends and defend well. In Reggie Miller and Rik Smits they have proven scorers. Miller has been somewhat disappointing in the regular season, seemingly adrift for long stretches. If he rediscovers his killer instinct and shoots as well as he did last postseason, he could be decisive.

Beware of: Point guard Mark Jackson's defensive limitations, which Orlando's Anfernee Hardaway and New York's Derek Harper can exploit. Otherwise, the Pacers

can play a lot of different ways and play each of them well.

X factor: The play of Derrick McKey. He's the most likely candidate to step forward as third scorer. At his best McKey is a poor man's Scottie Pippen, but for some reason he tends to get sleepy-eyed at times.

Unsung hero: Antonio Davis. His ability to play three positions gives the Pacers tremendous flexibility.

Bottom line: If the two Davises are healthy and McKey and Miller rise to the occasion, this team is capable of another long run.

Chicago Bulls

Overview: Without Michael Jordan, this was among the most difficult teams in the league to figure. The Bulls went through extended periods during which they couldn't prevent opponents from making sizeable runs. Coach Phil Jackson likes to play certain lineup combinations, but he has gotten burned more often than in the past. Jordan's presence as a bail-out option, defensive stopper, and on-court leader would make the Bulls much less prone to defensive collapses or long scoring droughts.

However, the departures of Bill Cartwright, Scott Williams, and Horace Grant have left Chicago with no interior toughness and no low-post threat, and those are problems Michael can't solve. The other key players—Scottie Pippen, B.J. Armstrong, and Toni Kukoc—work best in the open court and at the perimeter.

Beware of: Clubs that play a strong half-court game and crash the offensive boards. The Bulls still can force an opponent away from its offensive strengths, but they now play more of a Western Conference-style defense.

X factor: The inside game. To make any noise, the Bulls must get production out of the middle—whether it be from Luc Longley, Will Perdue, or Bill Wennington.

Unsung hero: Steve Kerr. Ron Harper got the big contract, but Kerr played the big minutes at off guard for most of the season. Kerr's sure outside shot is ideal for Chicago's triangle offense—especially if Michael is drawing double-teams.

Bottom line: Jordan's return would put the Bulls in the title hunt. Who'd dare bet against him? Even with Michael, though, the Bulls just aren't the same team he left. He'd better plan to stick around awhile.

Cleveland Cavaliers

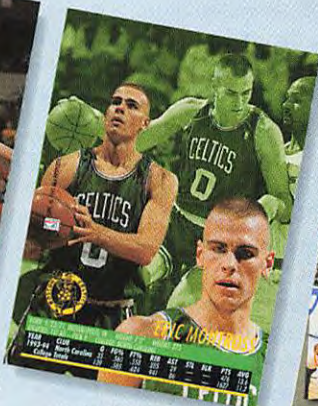
Overview: "Phenomenal" is the word to describe what the Cavaliers are accomplishing. Their slowdown style isn't pretty, but coach Mike Fratello gets the most out

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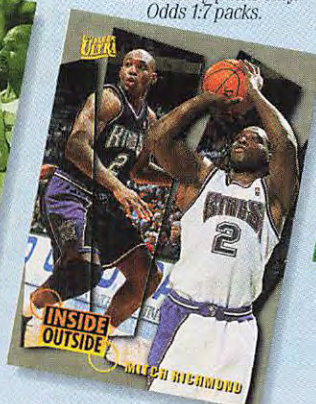


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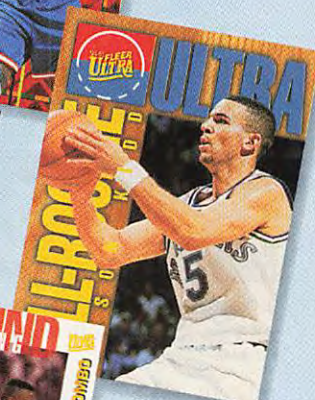


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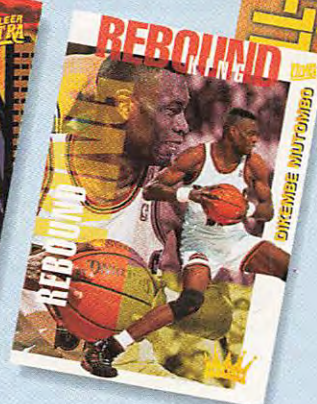
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of the talent that remained after Larry Nance retired, Brad Daugherty and Gerald Wilkins were lost for the season, and Mark Price and Tyrone Hill went down for significant stretches. In the past, when the Cavs were bothered by injuries they'd find reasons to lose; this season they've said, "This is what we have, so let's make the most of it—no excuses." From Hill to Price to Terrell Brandon to Bobby Phills, the Cavs have been the definition of team effort.

Beware of: Uptempo teams with sig-



Coleman is the Nets in a nutshell: loads of talent and no idea how to translate it into winning games.

nificant offensive capabilities. Cleveland wants to slow the game to a crawl, to lull an opponent into playing its style.

X factor: While the Cavaliers have worked successfully against the shot clock in the regular season, they'll be hard-pressed to do so in the playoffs. Their offense revolves around the three-point shot, and a reliance on long-range shooting can be a team's undoing in the postseason, when defensive intensity is much greater.

Unsung hero: The Cavaliers abound in them, but if I had to select one, it would be Hot Rod Williams. He has found a home at center, where his quickness is best utilized.

Bottom line: This team thrives on solid D, and the playoffs magnify that part of the game. For all their offensive shortcomings, the Cavaliers won't go away easily.

Atlanta Hawks

Overview: Dominique Wilkins, Kevin Willis, and Danny Manning are gone, and so is the inside game. What's more, Atlanta has no one who can shoot from the perimeter with any degree of consistency. The Omni offers no home-court advantage to speak of, which helps explain the players' lack of energy. On the plus side, Stacey Augmon shows flash-es of being a top-notch player. It took a while for Steve Smith to get acclimated to Lenny Wilkens' disciplined system, but he has improved steadily since the All-Star break. Grant Long is a workmanlike power forward. Mookie Blaylock remains the Hawks' best all-around player. Still, none of these players is a consistent force, much less a dominant one.

Beware of: Any opponent with a big front line or a dominant inside threat.

X factor: Perimeter shooting. For years, this has been a problem for the Hawks. Blaylock, Smith, and Craig Ehlo can shoot Atlanta into the game one night and out of it the next.

Unsung hero: Long. Although frequently over-matched in terms of size, he quietly goes about his job as a dependable rebounder and defender.

Bottom line: None of the teams that made significant deals this season—Atlanta, Golden State, Miami, and Washington—has fully

recovered. Even in that crowd, though, the Hawks have underachieved. There's talent here, but the pieces don't fit.

Here's a quick look at the teams contending for the last playoff spot in the East:

The **Boston Celtics** bet a ton of cash that veterans Pervis Ellison and Dominique Wilkins would make them competitive. They lost. But several young players have been impressive. Although power forward Dino Radja is a liability on defense, he has a tremendous upside at the offensive end. Rookie center Eric Montross has disappointed no one. The three-man nucleus of Radja, Montross, and shooting guard Dee Brown represents the future of this once-proud franchise.

Nevertheless, the Celtics lack speed,

quickness, and backcourt depth, and they'll suffer against mobile front lines and/or teams that effectively pressure the ball. Until the Celtics get a quality athletic type at small forward, the most they can expect is one playoff series and out.

Any team that can start Kenny Anderson at point guard, Kevin Edwards at off guard, Chris Morris at small forward, Derrick Coleman at power forward, and Benoit Benjamin in the middle certainly isn't short on talent. But the **New Jersey Nets** have no idea how to win. *No idea.* More times than not, the wrong guy will take the wrong shot at the wrong time late in a close game. The chemistry is all wrong, and there are too many different agendas.

New Jersey's size up front makes it a difficult matchup for physical teams such as the Knicks. Still, because the Nets rarely maintain their focus for any length of time, smarts and patience usually win out against them. The Nets have the potential to score a first-round upset. But how badly do they want it?

The **Milwaukee Bucks** are a good, young team that should get much better in the near future. The backbone is the multipurpose combination of rising stars Vin Baker and Glenn Robinson. In addition, Todd Day has begun to mature at off guard, and point guard Eric Murdock is an effective if unspectacular floor leader.

At this stage, though, the Bucks don't have interior size or toughness. Neither Baker nor Robinson qualifies as a true power player, and big, physical teams usually have their way with Milwaukee. This team has to resort to constant double-team pressure in the low post, so it's at the mercy of uncontested perimeter shooters. One more quality draft, and coach-GM Mike Dunleavy and his team will be ready to make some postseason noise.

The **Miami Heat** have some proven veterans—most notably Billy Owens, Glen Rice, and Kevin Willis—and they've played hard since Alvin Gentry took over as coach in February. However, the Heat lack a defensive presence and have no accomplished shot-blocker. In addition, there's no established floor leader: Point guard Bimbo Coles is a fine backup, but he becomes less effective the more minutes he plays; meanwhile, rookie Khalid Reeves has found the transition from college off guard to NBA point guard to be a difficult one.

Still, if the three-pronged attack of Owens, Rice, and Willis plays to its potential, the Heat could be a factor in a five-game series. After that, their weaknesses would be exposed.

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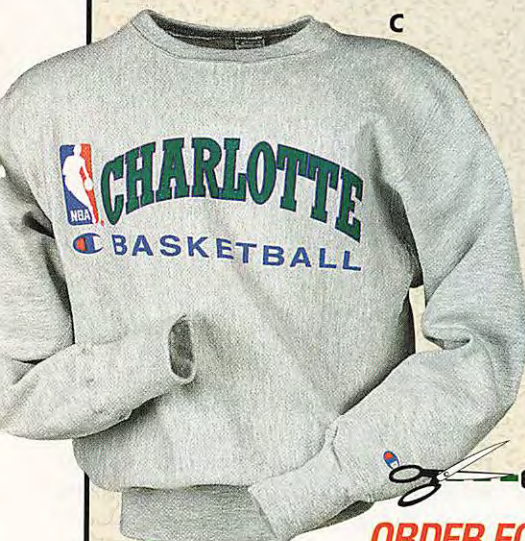
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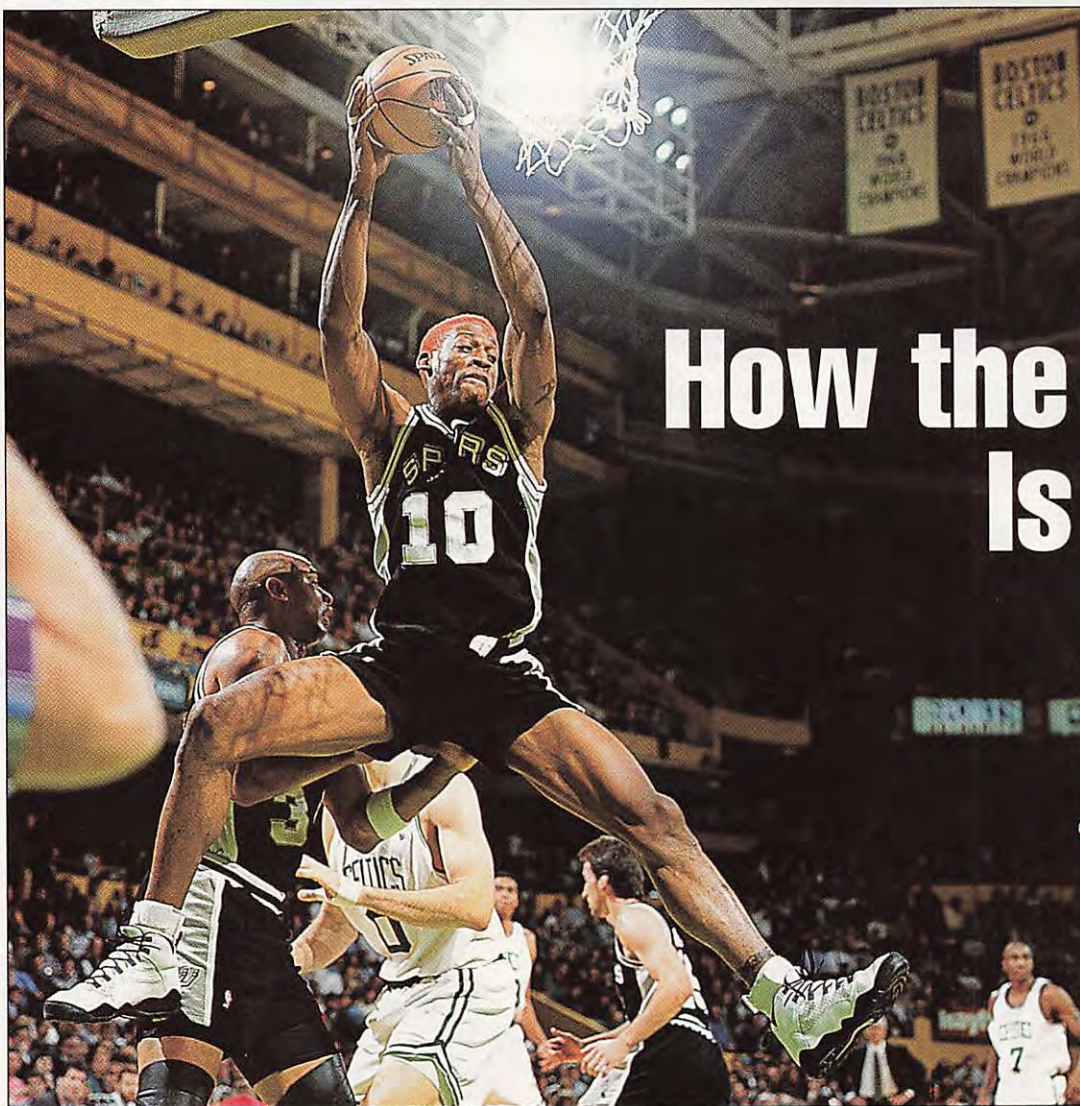
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THE WESTERN CONFERENCE

San Antonio Spurs

Overview: The strength of this team clearly is its front line. The frontcourt trio of Sean Elliott, Dennis Rodman, and David Robinson is the most complete in the league. We know all about Rodman's off-court antics, but don't underestimate his impact on the court. As a premier defender and rebounder, he gives Robinson the freedom to play away from the basket. Rodman will be looking for a contract extension, so expect him to be at the top of his game in the playoffs.

In addition, this team is deeper than it's been in recent years. Last season the Spurs managed to win consistently despite significant problems—namely lack of size and experience at point guard, and suspect perimeter shooting. Those problems have been addressed through the acquisition of Doc Rivers and Chuck Person. From one through 12, this is as good as the Spurs

have been in recent memory.

Beware of: Teams with quick backcourts. The Lakers, for example, can pressure the ball effectively and force Spurs coach Bob Hill to go to his bench sooner than he would like to.

X factor: Point guard. The persistent question is whether Avery Johnson is a role player or a floor leader who can guide his team to a title. Rivers gives the Spurs more size, muscle, and experience at the position, but at 33, how much is left?

Unsung hero: Vinny Del Negro. Now that he's back at off guard where he belongs, Del Negro has capably filled the role of a third scorer.

Bottom line: Will this team be a first-round disappointment or the next NBA champion? Based on the Spurs' play since Rodman's return in mid-December, I believe they'll be closer to the latter.

Seattle SuperSonics

Overview: At this time last year, we

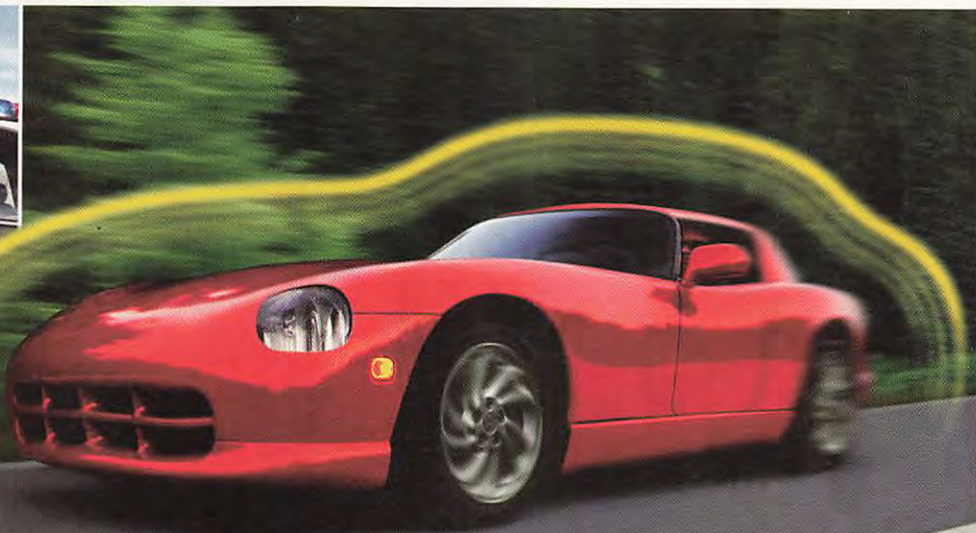
asked: Can the Sonics win it all without an acknowledged superstar? That remains the question. Seattle has explosive talent, tremendous depth, and All-Stars in Shawn Kemp, Detlef Schrempf and Gary Payton—but it doesn't have a go-to guy in the mold of Hakeem Olajuwon or David Robinson, someone who *must* have the ball when the game is on the line. If management had pulled the trigger on the Kemp-for-Scottie Pippen deal last summer, the Sonics would be the odds-on favorites to win the NBA title. I believe Pippen would have turned Seattle into an NBA champion not only this season, but perhaps for several years to come.

It's puzzling: This team can get on a roll and look unbeatable, then suddenly it blows a big lead at home, and the doubts resurface. Are the Sonics just good enough to break their fans' hearts?

Beware of: The Lakers, who have dominated the season series.

X factor: Half-court offense. In the play-

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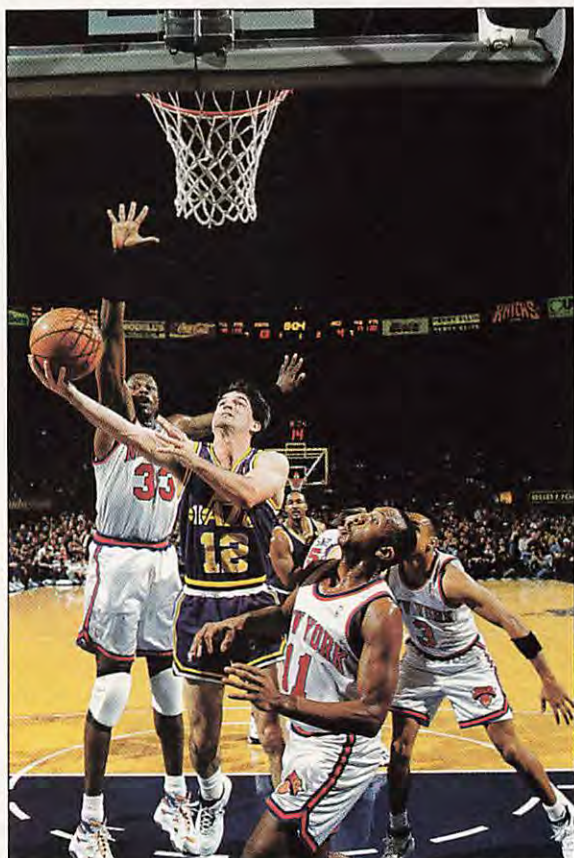
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offs last year the Denver Nuggets took away the Sonics' inside game and forced them to live or die from the perimeter. Expect the same strategy this year. The Sonics are shooting better from the outside this season, but I'm not convinced about that aspect of their game—particularly from their guards.

Unsung hero: Nate McMillan. Never mind



NATHANIEL S. BUTLER/NBA PHOTOS

Without a legitimate big man, Stockton's Jazz will have a tough time in the postseason paint.

the statistics—he remains this team's glue.

Bottom line: The Sonics have the pieces to be NBA champions, but they have to show me they can put them together.

Phoenix Suns

Overview: The Suns are a playoff-tested team that commits the fewest turnovers in the league and doesn't beat itself. Nevertheless, the loss of Danny Manning to a serious knee injury leaves Phoenix in a precarious position. Manning is best known for his offensive work, but he was the club's top shot-blocker, and the most pressing concerns for the Suns are their lack of interior size and defensive commitment.

While Phoenix has a wealth of talent at guard and forward, it remains to be seen whether depth will be a factor. Coach Paul

Westphal was second-guessed in the playoffs last year when he benched his big people against Hakeem Olajuwon and the Houston Rockets. Will he sit Elliot Perry and rookie Wesley Person, who have been critical to the Suns' success this year, in favor of veterans Kevin Johnson and Danny Ainge? I believe Westphal has to play to the strengths of his team and stay with

what has worked.

Beware of: Opponents who can both score from the inside and beat double-team pressure with consistent outside shooting. Specifically, that means Houston and San Antonio. Portland and Sacramento also could figure here.

X factor: Rebounding and interior defense. Phoenix opponents have been making about 48% of their shots this season. The Suns will have to clamp down on defense in the playoffs.

Unsung hero: Perry. When KJ missed large chunks of the season with various injuries, Perry played far beyond expectations for someone who once was cut by the Los Angeles Clippers.

Bottom line: While it may be a stretch to say the Suns could win it all without Manning's presence, they are capable of an NBA Finals berth if Johnson and Charles Barkley are healthy. At the same time, if they meet a team with whom they match up poorly, they could be gone

in the first round.

Houston Rockets

Overview: Almost every successful center has had a power forward riding shotgun. That was the case last season, when Hakeem Olajuwon carried the Rockets to an NBA title with the help of Otis Thorpe. The Thorpe-for-Clyde Drexler trade left Houston without a proven muscle man—and to make matters worse, Hakeem has no capable backup. This means the Rockets rely on Olajuwon more than ever, and that's a tremendous burden even for the best player in the NBA.

On the other hand, it's not as if Drexler doesn't have anything left. On the contrary, the trade revitalized him to a large degree. Clyde is where he wants to be and in a position to win his first NBA championship.

He provides the Rockets with an added offensive dimension. This team can get out on the break, and Clyde is one of the best open-court players in NBA history. He also is underrated as a passer. The only drawback is that he's not 6'10".

Beware of: Power teams such as San Antonio and Portland, who can exploit the void on the Rockets' front line.

X factor: The play of Pete Chilcutt and Carlos Herrera. In order for the Rockets to challenge seriously, one or both must produce at power forward.

Unsung hero: Mario Elie. Sam Cassell, Vernon Maxwell, and Kenny Smith have had up-and-down seasons; Elie has been the team's steadiest perimeter shooter.

Bottom line: The Rockets gambled that they could replace Thorpe with another power player prior to the trade deadline, and the move backfired. Because neither Chilcutt nor Herrera is the answer, a championship repeat seems out of the question.

Utah Jazz

Overview: The season-ending injury to Felton Spencer was a devastating blow to Utah's playoff hopes. Remember the yeoman work Spencer did against David Robinson, Dikembe Mutombo, and Hakeem Olajuwon in consecutive playoff series last year? Without him the Jazz have virtually no big men. Veteran James Donaldson will give Utah some minutes at center, but at age 37 he can't carry the whole load. Coach Jerry Sloan will be forced to use Tom Chambers and Karl Malone in the middle, and that makes for defensive mismatches.

That's too bad, too, because now that Jeff Hornacek has had a full season with the Jazz, he'll be more playoff-ready than he was last year. Hornacek gives this team a consistent scorer to complement Malone and provides relief for John Stockton at point guard. But with Spencer in the lineup, the Jazz would have been far more capable of big things.

Beware of: Houston and San Antonio. Their dominant centers present the most problems for Utah.

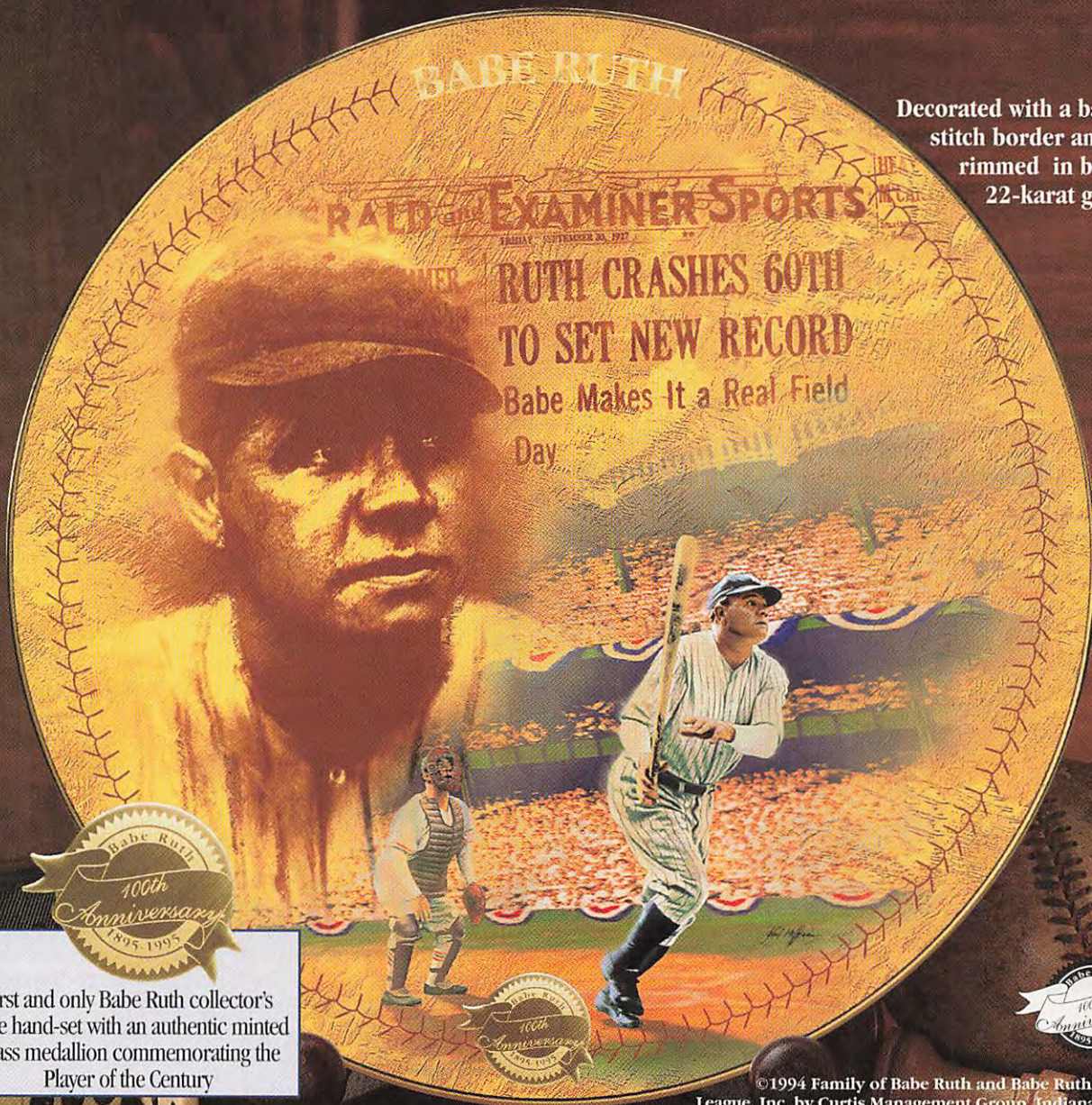
X factor: Can the bench provide any semblance of inside play? In the absence of Spencer, the burden will be on Chambers, Antoine Carr, and Adam Keefe.

Unsung hero: David Benoit. The Jazz have been desperate for a small forward with his size and quickness for years. It's taken awhile, but Benoit has blossomed into the kind of player many expected he'd become.

Bottom line: We know what Hornacek, Malone, and Stockton will give this team.

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First and only Babe Ruth collector's plate hand-set with an authentic minted brass medallion commemorating the Player of the Century

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"The 60th Homer" is inspired by the actual photos and headlines of September 30, 1927, when Babe walloped a fastball from Washington's Tom Zachary into the right field bleachers. It was his 60th home run of the season, a record destined to be one of the most fabled in baseball. Artist Phil Heffernan's thrilling work brings the moment to life now re-created on fine porcelain rimmed with 22-karat gold.

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12321-E45791

Even without Spencer, the Jazz could emerge from the West—but only if another inside player steps forward. The window of opportunity on Malone's and Stockton's NBA title hopes is closing to a crack.

Los Angeles Lakers

Overview: A lot of people thought veteran coach Del Harris would be a bad fit for this young team, but that hasn't been the case. Harris has played to the strengths of his players. Fueled by the explosiveness of Nick Van Exel at the point and rookie find Eddie Jones at shooting guard and small forward, the Lakers thrive on pressuring the ball and forcing turnovers that lead to easy baskets.

Yet despite the great strides, this team remains a work in progress. With the exception of Cedric Ceballos and Sedale

Beware of: A deep front line such as Portland's. The Lakers are hard-pressed to defend and rebound in a half-court set.

X factor: Inside presence. In order for the Lakers to compete in the grind-it-out style of the playoffs, Campbell, Divac, and Sam Bowie will have to hold their ground.

Unsung hero: Bowie. At 7'1", he gives the Lakers a much-needed shot-blocker in the middle. He also allows Harris to shift Divac to power forward for an alignment that provides better matchups against big front lines.

Bottom line: The Lakers are young and talented—a mix that could make them oblivious to postseason pressure. If they're not content with what they've accomplished, a first-round upset is a distinct possibility.

Portland Trail Blazers

Overview: My main question about this team is the effect of the trade for Otis Thorpe. Teams that have changed pieces in mid-stream generally have not done well this year. What's more, the deal left the Blazers with a glut of power players, some of whom are too good to sit on the bench for long stretches. Will these guys know and accept their revised roles in time for the playoffs?

Then again, you could do worse than having too many big men. If this isn't the best rebounding team in the West, it's on a short list. The back-court picture should be a bit clearer come the playoffs, assuming that Terry Porter regains his rhythm after a lengthy layoff. Point guard Rod Strickland is having his best season, and James Robinson is coming into his own as an explosive off guard. However, none of the three is a consistent outside shooter.

Beware of: Teams who can either match Portland's athleticism or control the tempo and force mistakes, thus limiting open-court opportunities. The Blazers are most effective when they react instinctively.

X factor: Free throw shooting. Orlando is the only playoff qualifier that shoots worse from the line. Not surprisingly, Portland fares significantly better in blowouts than

in tight games, when free throws are crucial.

Unsung hero: Strickland. He may not be unsung to folks in Portland, but his absence from the Western Conference All-Star team indicates he has yet to receive his due.

Bottom line: This is a team that, given the right matchup, could cause problems for a higher seed.

Here's a quick look at the teams contending for the last playoff spot in the West:

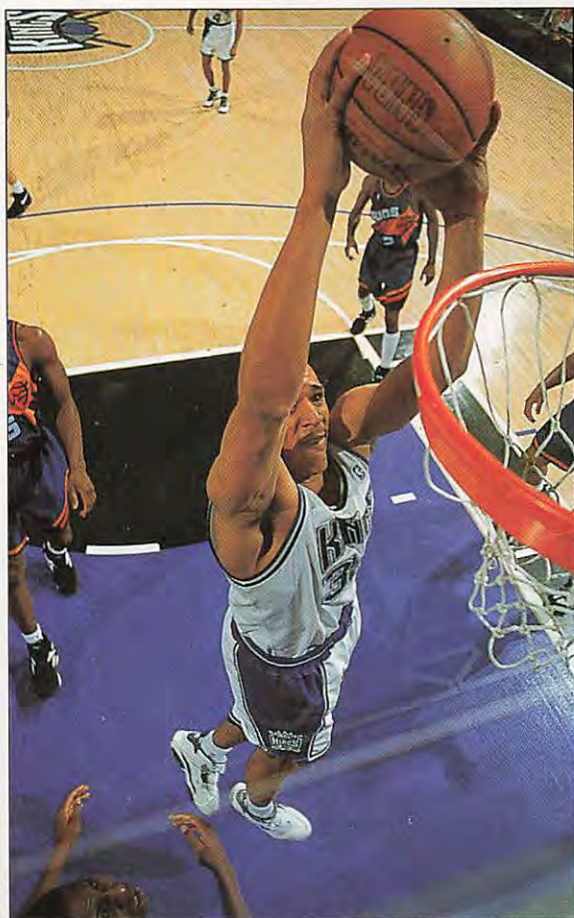
The **Sacramento Kings** drafted for size last June, when they selected forwards Brian Grant and Michael Smith. The result is a bigger, deeper team that's better-suited for the playoffs war. Even more impressive is their newfound commitment to defense, for which Grant—a sensation at power forward—has been largely responsible. Spud Webb, who has given Sacramento everything it could want at point guard, small forward Walt Williams, and off guard Mitch Richmond, the 1995 All-Star Game MVP, all have excelled. If this team can turn it around at the free throw line, it must be considered a bona fide darkhorse.

The Kings are inexperienced—note their nosedive after the All-Star break—and teams that have a big-time scorer in the middle (Houston and San Antonio) or a number of veterans (Phoenix and Utah) could exploit their weaknesses. However, this bunch reminds me of the Denver team that surprised everyone in the '94 playoffs: low expectations and a high talent level.

Ever since Bernie Bickerstaff took the coaching reins, the **Denver Nuggets** have resembled the team that was the biggest surprise of last season's playoffs. Still, this year's team is missing a major component to last year's success: LaPhonso Ellis at power forward. With Ellis out injured, Dikembe Mutombo has found it more difficult to operate in the middle. The pressure rests on Brian Williams to match his consistent postseason play of 1994.

Another unknown factor is the back-court. Point guard Robert Pack stepped forward in the playoffs last spring, but he has been only so-so this season; Mahmoud Abdul-Rauf and rookie Jalen Rose also have put in time at the point. If the Nuggets are to compete, one of the three has to take control. Given these question marks, Denver will be hard-pressed to pull off another ambush. ■

Special contributor DOUG COLLINS worked with writer PAUL LADEWSKI in preparing this article.



ROCKY WINNER

Grant's been a revelation for the newborn Kings, who just might pull off a spring surprise.

Threatt, the Lakers don't shoot particularly well either from the field or at the free throw line. They also lack muscle; Elden Campbell and Vlade Divac are finesse players at power positions. With one big body, the Lakers would be ready to take another giant step.



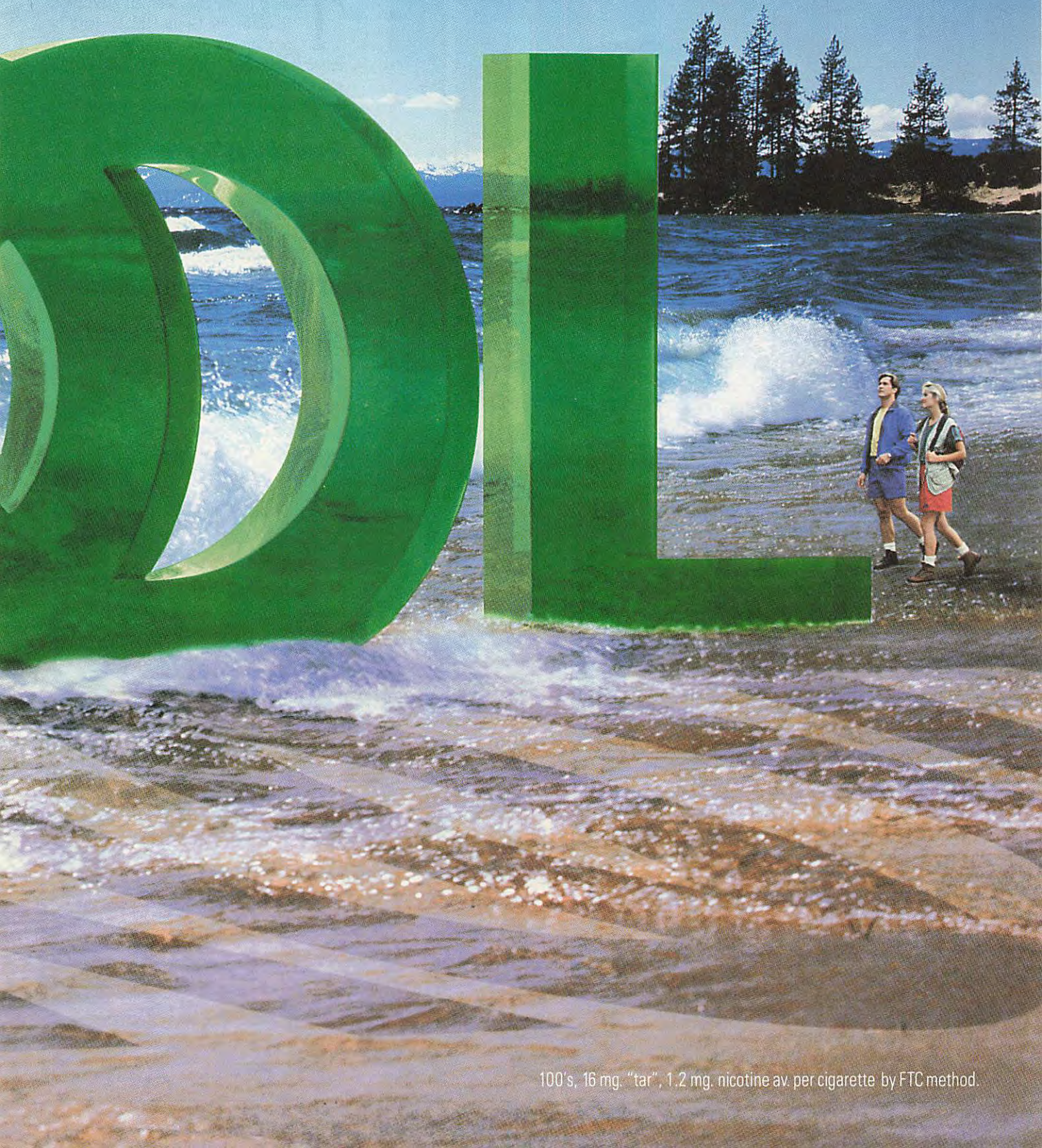
what preferred men prefer

the extra-smooth cologne from the house of stetson

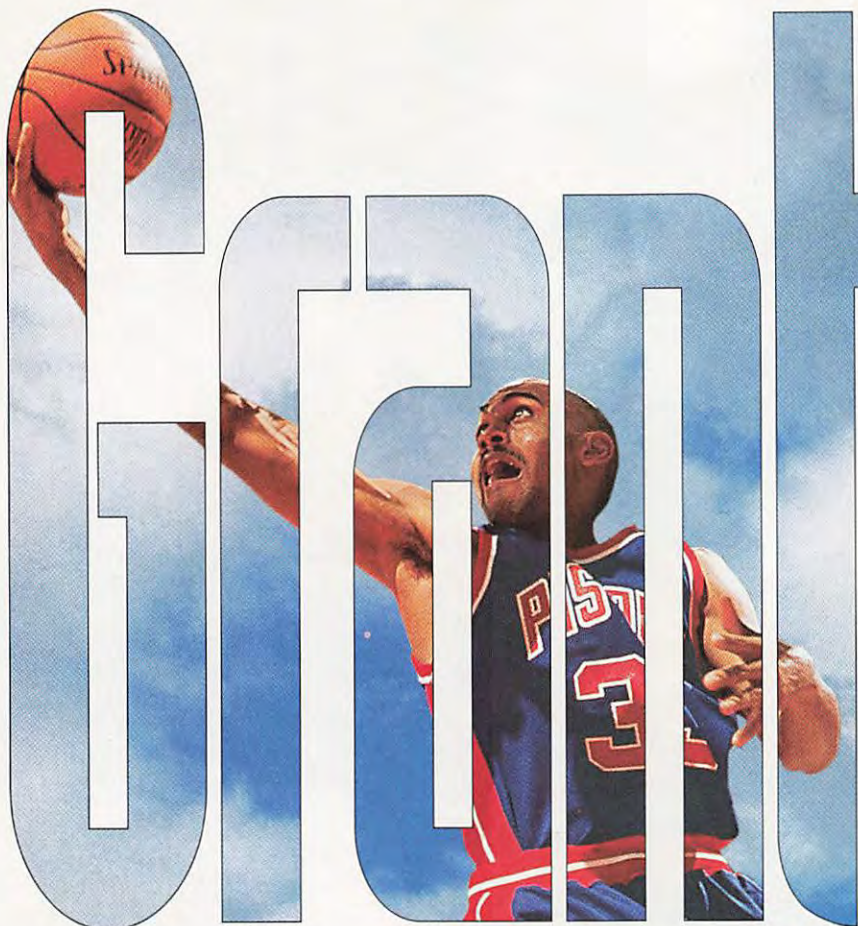
PREFERRED STOCK



SURGEON GENERAL'S WARNING: Smoking
By Pregnant Women May Result in Fetal
Injury, Premature Birth, And Low Birth Weight.



100's, 16 mg. "tar", 1.2 mg. nicotine av. per cigarette by FTC method.



you're open outside a lot."

Grant walked to his father and put his arms around him. "Dad, you're my father, and I love you," he said. "Coach K [Duke coach Mike Krzyzewski] is my coach. You do a great job as my father; he does a great job as my coach. Let's not change that."

Calvin didn't say another word. He knew he had raised his son well, and now his son was returning the favor.

There never has been an NBA rookie quite like Grant Hill. He isn't, by any means, the best player ever to enter the league—in fact, the case can be made that Jason Kidd has had more impact on the Dallas Mavericks this season than

Everybody's new NBA favorite is admired not just for the greatness of his game, but for the content of his character

By JOHN FEINSTEIN

LESSON 1: IN APRIL 1991, shortly after Duke had won the NCAA Basketball Tournament and Grant Hill's picture had run on the cover of a national magazine with the headline WISH GRANTED, Calvin Hill flew to Durham for the Duke team banquet. His son, then the most acclaimed freshman on a college basketball title team since Michael Jordan, was supposed to pick him up at the airport.

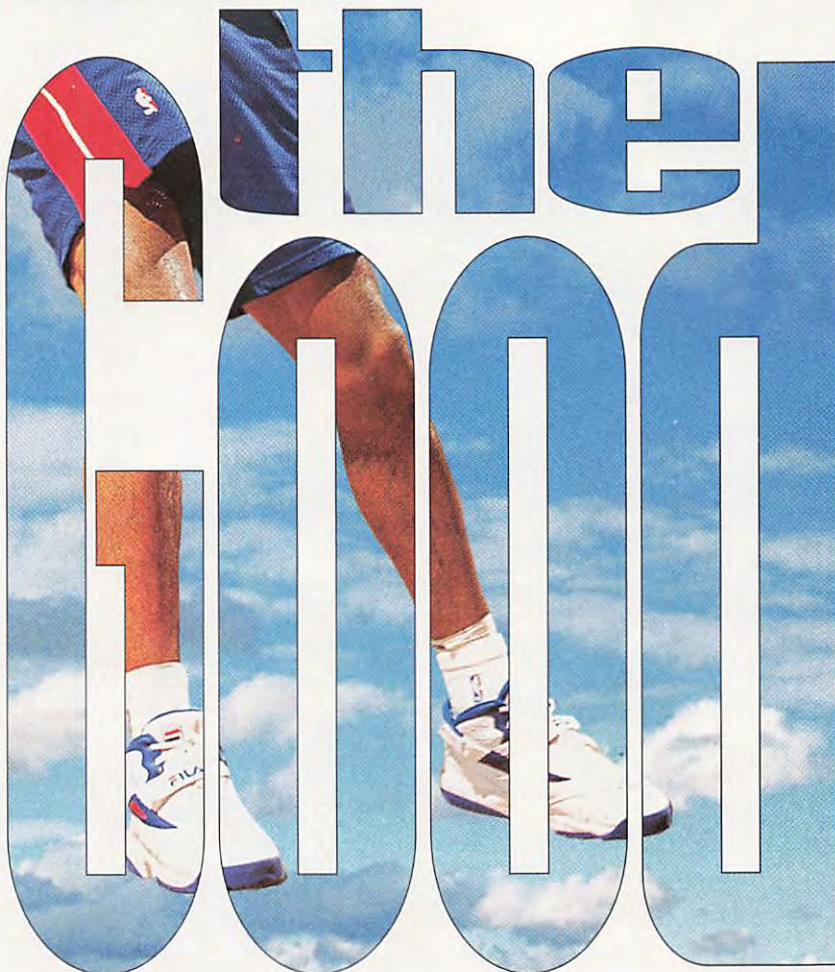
Grant forgot.

When the younger Hill walked into the basketball office later that day and saw his father sitting there, a look of horror passed over his face. "Oh my god, Dad, I'm sorry," he said. "I got all tied up with things, and I forgot."

Calvin waved a hand. "It's no problem, Grant," he said. "But when I go home tomorrow, I'm going to forget to leave your car here."

The next day, Calvin Hill drove home in his son's car. His son never forgot to pick him up at the airport again.

Lesson 2: Moments after a Duke victory early in the 1993-94 season, Calvin Hill sat a few feet from his son's locker, waiting for him to finish talking with the media. When the last reporter left, the father looked at the son and said quietly: "Shouldn't you be taking more threes? It looks to me like



GRANT HILL BY SCOTT CUNNINGHAM/NEA PHOTOS

Hill has had on the Detroit Pistons. But Hill was the leading vote-getter among fans for the All-Star Game this season—not the leading *rookie*, the leading *player*, ahead of Shaq and Sir Charles and Hakeem and the Admiral and Ewing and anyone else you would care to name.

Is Hill the best player in the NBA? Of course not. Is he one of the 10 best? Probably not—at least not yet. He's very good—often spectacular—and no doubt will get even better. But at the moment he's far from the best.

He is, however, the most popular player in the NBA, and the most marketable. In all likelihood, he'll be on your TV screen pitching products almost non-stop in the weeks, months, and years to come.

"Grant Hill is such a good person," says Lee Fentress, the marketing representative who is in the process of making Hill the most popular basketball player among corporate America, "that sometimes you

can you say that about?" Supreme Court Justice Byron (Whizzer) White comes to mind, as do Arthur Ashe, Bill Bradley, and a handful of others. The list is short.

The Hills are aware of the expectations weighing upon Grant; they always have been. That's one reason Calvin never wanted his son to be a football player. It's also why Janet pulls at Calvin from behind every time he wants to push Grant a little harder. Sometimes Grant bridled at all the discipline and expectations, and sometimes he still does. But behind the easy smile, he burns to succeed at everything.

Fentress is paid to market and promote Hill, but others who have no stake in him, financially or emotionally, come away saying the same things. If he never had picked up a basketball, Grant Hill would have been the most popular kid in school, every teacher's pet, the boy every mother wanted her daughter to bring home. He's friendly without being overbearing, funny without being insulting, polite without sounding patronizing.

"He's just one of those kids you see greatness in right away," says Indiana Pacers coach Larry Brown. "But it's the kind of greatness that goes beyond his ability to play the game. You meet him for five minutes, and you know he's special."

If Hill has shown any weakness as a player, it's his sensitivity to other people's feelings. It took

Krzyzewski three years to convince Hill it was OK to be the best player on the court, to show off his skills, even though he was younger than Christian Laettner and Bobby Hurley, Duke's stars when Hill first arrived.

"I had to learn that I didn't have to defer to other players because of seniority," Hill says. "That was hard at first, because my parents had always taught me that you show respect for your elders. Coach K finally got it through to me that on the basketball court everyone's the same age. You just go out and try to be the best."

He did that his senior season, when he took a Duke team nowhere near as talented as the 1991 and 1992 champions to within one minute of another NCAA title. During that tournament run, Hill kept saying he wanted a third ring so that he would be one up on Hurley and Laettner, and people laughed—only he wasn't joking. Whether he wants to admit it or not, Hill is just as competitive as either of his two ultracompetitive former teammates, or as his father.

Yet he brings out none of the nastiness in opponents that has become an unfortunate part of college basketball. Laettner

and Hurley were as unpopular around the country as any two players in the sport—booed and taunted almost everywhere they went. Grant Hill never has heard any of that. Duke's 118-23 record during Hill's four years was like a knife through the heart of North Carolina Tar Heels fans, but they respected him, even grudgingly admired him, in much the same way Duke fans applauded Jordan at Carolina.

Hill's arrival in the NBA is timed perfectly for the league. Jordan and Larry Bird and Magic Johnson are gone. Charles Barkley is a shadow of what he once was. The marketing superstar is Shaquille O'Neal, but the simple fact is, a 7'1", 300-pound center who cuts rap records isn't as appealing to Madison Avenue as a 6'8" forward who plays the piano on the Letterman show and talks softly about what his mom and dad taught him. To marketers, Hill is a dream come true. He's the anti-Shaq.

Fentress can attest to Hill's appeal. The agent also represents David Robinson, who has many of Hill's qualities: a degree from a rigorous academic institution—in the Admiral's case, the Naval Academy—a winning personality, good looks, and a mind even more impressive than his body. However, while Robinson did well as a salesman, he never came close to the offers that have come Hill's way. Why?

"Size is a factor," Fentress says. "People just can't relate to 7'1". A guy 6'8" is at least in the ballpark. What's more, even though people had heard of David while he was at Navy, they didn't feel they knew him intimately like they do Grant."

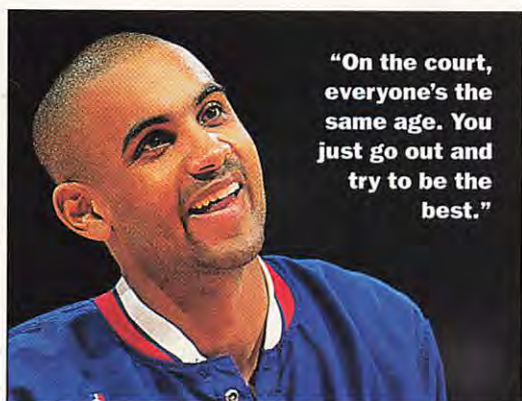
Everyone, it seems, feels they know Grant Hill. He comes across as the guy who never would ask for money for an autograph—in fact, who would thank you for asking for one. He loves basketball but has opinions on a lot of things that have nothing to do with the game. Most of all, he's the boy next door, Calvin and Janet's son, who went on to do so well at Duke. *Remember him? He was always so nice.*

Grant Hill is a nice person in an era when most pro athletes think being called nice is a putdown. Dennis Rodman stared down Santa Claus for a Nike commercial. The logo on Andre Agassi's latest line of clothing is TENNIS SUCKS. You think Hill will be caught dead stomping the Easter Bunny or wearing a HOOPS STINKS shirt? Not Calvin and Janet's son. No way.

Letterman: "So, you got yourself quite a contract, didn't you. Really big bucks?"

Hill: "Well, I did OK—but nothing like you make."

Letterman blushes. America cracks up. The legend grows. ■



"On the court, everyone's the same age. You just go out and try to be the best."

KEN WHITE

have to pinch yourself and say, 'Can this be real?' He has everything you could want. He plays an exciting kind of game, he's good-looking, he's very articulate, he's a Duke graduate, and he and his parents have been on television so much the last four years that people feel like they're already part of the family."

It's no accident that the first words Hill spoke in his very first national TV commercial were: "My father always used to say..." That's the core of the Grant Hill mystique: He's the son every parent dreams about. His father graduated from Yale and was a star running back in the NFL in the 1970s. His mother, Janet, a Wellesley grad, is drop-dead gorgeous and stone-cold brilliant. In a sense, the Hills have been America's family for four years—Grant making spectacular plays in big games while the cameras kept peeking over at Calvin and Janet looking on.

"Grant is one of those rare athletes who, as great a player as he may become, you honestly expect him to do more important things with his life when he's through playing," Fentress says. "How many athletes

EVERYMAN AND SUPERMAN

*Babe Ruth's very humanity is the
force that underlies his enduring legend*

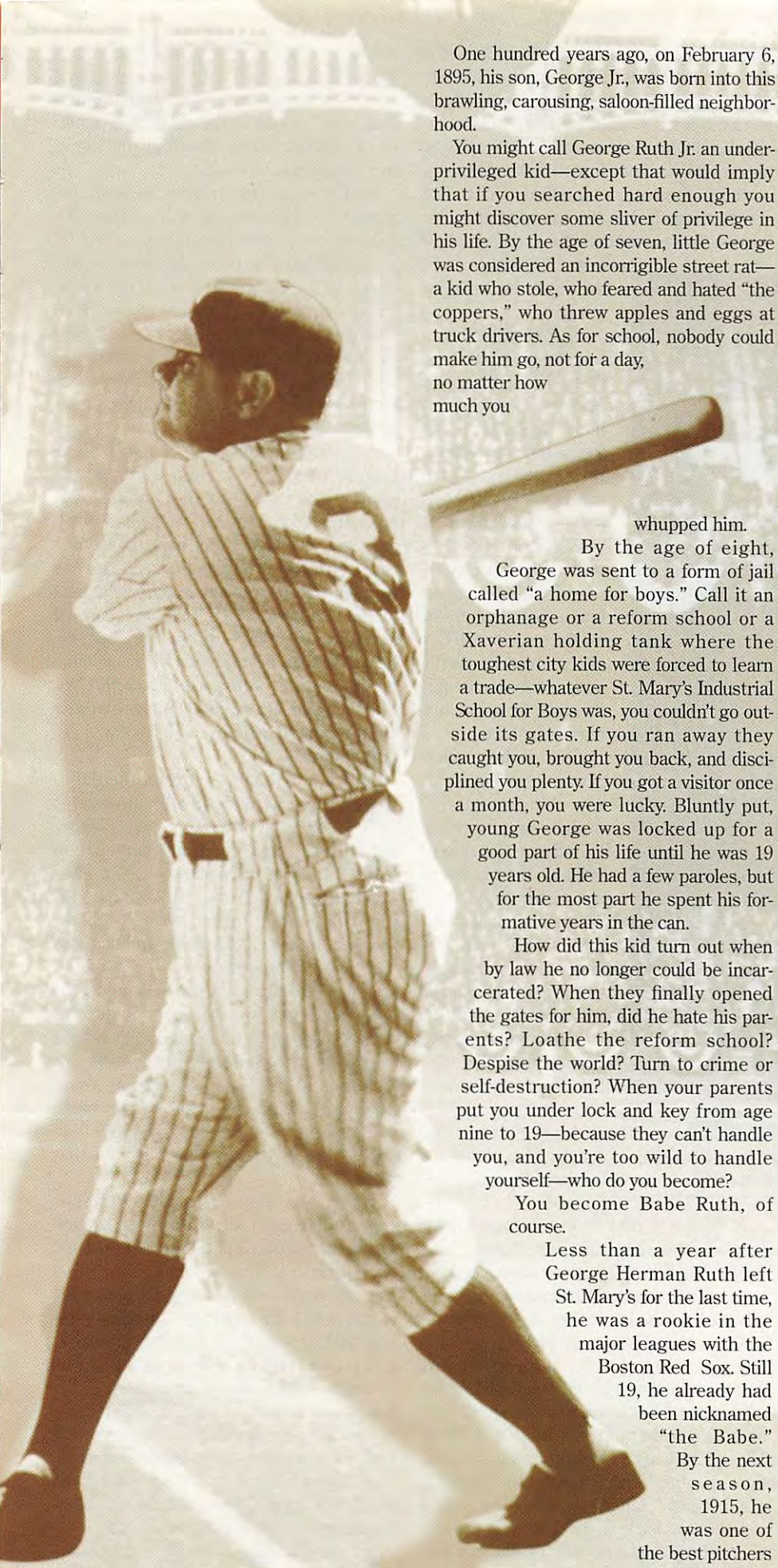
By **THOMAS BOSWELL**



Baseball helped young Ruth [back row, far left] find his place and purpose in American life—a favor he later returned to the game.

C ENTER FIELD IN ORIOLE Park at Camden Yards is heaven now. If a blade of grass gets tired of standing, a groundskeeper brings it a little chair. People pay a membership fee of \$1,000 just to look out over center field from the Camden Club in the famous brick warehouse across the street from the park. The price does not include meals.

A century ago the neighborhood was a kind of hell. Just steps from where Cal Ripken now plays, guys would drink and rumble in the saloons on virtually every corner. Today this section of Baltimore is called the Inner Harbor, but back then it was just "the docks," the waterfront, the wrong side of the tracks. A guy named George Ruth ran one of the saloons there, on the bottom floor of his tiny row house. Not a nice place. How tough was life in "the docks"? Old George eventually died in a bar brawl, his head split open.



One hundred years ago, on February 6, 1895, his son, George Jr., was born into this brawling, carousing, saloon-filled neighborhood.

You might call George Ruth Jr. an underprivileged kid—except that would imply that if you searched hard enough you might discover some sliver of privilege in his life. By the age of seven, little George was considered an incorrigible street rat—a kid who stole, who feared and hated “the coppers,” who threw apples and eggs at truck drivers. As for school, nobody could make him go, not for a day, no matter how much you

whipped him.

By the age of eight, George was sent to a form of jail called “a home for boys.” Call it an orphanage or a reform school or a Xaverian holding tank where the toughest city kids were forced to learn a trade—whatever St. Mary’s Industrial School for Boys was, you couldn’t go outside its gates. If you ran away they caught you, brought you back, and disciplined you plenty. If you got a visitor once a month, you were lucky. Bluntly put, young George was locked up for a good part of his life until he was 19 years old. He had a few paroles, but for the most part he spent his formative years in the can.

How did this kid turn out when by law he no longer could be incarcerated? When they finally opened the gates for him, did he hate his parents? Loathe the reform school? Despise the world? Turn to crime or self-destruction? When your parents put you under lock and key from age nine to 19—because they can’t handle you, and you’re too wild to handle yourself—who do you become?

You become Babe Ruth, of course.

Less than a year after George Herman Ruth left St. Mary’s for the last time, he was a rookie in the major leagues with the Boston Red Sox. Still

19, he already had been nicknamed “the Babe.”

By the next season, 1915, he was one of the best pitchers

in the major leagues, posting an 18-8 record and a 2.44 earned run average. Within months of his release from St. Mary’s he was semirich, semifamous, and married to a pretty 17-year-old waitress whom he met on his first day with the Red Sox in Boston.

The world had been gouging Ruth in the eye since the day he was born. Now, in a blink, he was in the headlines. Even as a kid pitcher, he hit some of the longest bush-league home runs ever seen. He was in the money, in the driver’s seat. The Babe had the hammer. What was his answer?

As a minor-leaguer with the Baltimore Orioles in the spring of 1914 Babe got a half-dozen kids from St. Mary’s passes to one of his ball games. Alarmed Orioles officials thought the young toughs were a criminal element—fixers, perhaps—until Babe explained that they were just old friends. Later, after the 1915 season, Ruth—by then a star—returned to Baltimore and set his ne’er-do-well father up with a new saloon, using the World Series money he had earned as a member of the champion Red Sox. Babe helped his old man work behind the bar during the off-season.

The Babe’s generosity didn’t surprise the orphans, delinquents, and abandoned boys of St. Mary’s. As a kid, in the winter, when the days grew frigid, Ruth would run around the playground—or prison yard, if you will—rubbing the hands and blowing on the fingers of the smaller, shivering children. Sometimes he’d accept blame for offenses by younger, weaker boys, saying, “Take it on the lam. I’m tough. I can take it.”

Most of all, the Babe went back to see the boss of the joint: 6’6”, 250-pound Brother Matthias, whom Ruth called “the greatest man I’ve ever known.” If you want, you can call Brother Matthias Ruth’s real father, and St. Mary’s his real home. Plenty see it that way. For 10 years, Brother Matthias gave Ruth the only discipline and direction he ever received—punishing him, tolerating his insubordination, enjoying his ragamuffin charm, and, finally, exposing him to the game they both loved. In the St. Mary’s yard, Brother Matthias batted enormous, towering fungoes to the boys—with one hand. “I was born as a hitter,” Ruth said, “the first day I ever saw him hit a baseball.”

Now, don’t you miss Babe Ruth? Don’t you wish you could turn back the clock 100 years and watch his whole show, start to finish? If you’re one of the few people still alive who actually saw him in his prime, aren’t you glad?

As for the rest of us, we must be content

with the stories, the legends, and the tributes such as are found in Ken Burns' "Baseball." Inning 4 of Burns' documentary revolves around Ruth in all his moon-faced, beer-bellied, bandy-legged, twinkle-toed glory, swinging from the end of the bat with a mixture of gargantuan force and sweet, fluid grace. It was both the *hardest* and the *prettiest* swing the game has seen,

thing, Ruth's face makes both intelligence and handsomeness seem overrated. It displays only a bit of the first and none of the second—yet wouldn't most of us trade faces with him? He welcomes us, accepts us, wants to have fun with us. He asks nothing, might give anything. Oceans of children crashed at his feet each day like waves. Sportswriter Jimmy Cannon called him "Santa Claus drinking his whiskey straight."

Deepening the portrait are the pictures of Ruth in repose. He often looks sad or, perhaps, overexposed to the sadness of others. He was the first of his mother's eight children, six of whom died young. Some speculate that the difficulty of his birth led Kate to blame her oldest son for the tragedies of her other children. Ruth supposedly once said flat-out, "I think my mother hated me."

The Babe's face says everything about why his appeal remains so powerful. He's the antithesis of what we have come to mean by "modern." That face belongs to a man who could get angry, throw a punch, or hold a grudge, but who couldn't be bitter or alienated or secretive. A guy with a face like that could come up with any goofy idea or dopey malapropism, but he also would be the first to apologize. Sincerely,

Reduce the rest of Ruth's face to two words, and perhaps they'd be "joyous" and "generous." Life's a candy store, and he can't wait to rob it. We're invited, too. We'll all take it on the lam if the coppers arrive.

The other light that plays in Ruth's face—not as shadow, but as sharp counterpoint—is hunger. He's always prowling for something. Watch the old footage of him standing at the plate waiting for a pitch. His whole body is a pantomime of impatient appetite. There's a tap of the bat, then a quick little half-swing as his body, feet together far back in the box, sways to his own private dance of anticipation. You can

almost see him licking his lips, waiting to devour the pitch as if it were a big, thick steak—why, he's practically running his knife over his fork as the waiter comes into sight. Pitchers must have felt they were throwing sirloin to a wolf.

Ruth's wonderful incorrectness shines around him like an aura of liberation. Oh, to be so completely innocent of society, so stupid about the rules, that you could always shrug, "They didn't teach me that at the reform school." Freud says that deep down we all hate the rules and would play by our own if we could. Ruth does it for us. That makes him—even 70 years removed—as raw and intoxicating as straight gin.

A cultivated woman once asked Ruth how he had won a certain trophy in his home. "In a farting contest," he told her, since that was the truth. "What a fascinating man," she said to her husband as they left. On another occasion an heiress thanked Ruth for attending her benefit gala and making it a smash. "Oh, shit, lady, I'd have done it for anybody," he said, because he would have. No deed was too open-handed, no carefree remark too gauche. Not that he cared. On seeing President Warren Harding one day, Ruth said, "Hot as hell, ain't it, Prez?"

As we now know—by rote, thanks to Robert Creamer's definitive biography, "Babe"—no man of his time had a bigger appetite for beer, food, or women than Ruth. A flask of prohibition whiskey, a big cigar, a two-inch thick steak, a new girl, and the chance to bat against Walter Johnson the next day before a full house in Yankee Stadium—that was the sum and substance of life to Ruth. He would gulp down three hot dogs between his turns in the cage during batting practice, then have the batboy bring him a bicarbonate of soda. That was Ruth's ritual. Why waste those precious minutes between swings when you could be eating? As he would tell waiters, "Put a few lamb chops around that steak."

Perhaps no American public figure this century has approached Ruth's reputation for lustiness. Baseball historian Lee Allen once described Ruth as "a large man in a camel's hair coat and camel's hair cap, standing in front of a hotel, his broad nostrils sniffing at the promise of the night." In a St. Louis bordello, Ruth bragged that he would conduct business with every girl in the house that night, and he did. In New York traffic he struck up a conversation with a fashionable widow, roadster to roadster. The banter went so well that Ruth simply abandoned his car in the middle of the street to ride off with the woman.

No baseball player ever visited so many



Ruth was welcome in high society and low—a quality helpful in feeding his insatiable appetite for life.

and it came from the same man. It was the perfect paradoxical swing for a joyfully contradictory man: vulgar yet kind, self-centered yet generous, an ignoramus beloved by high society and lowbrows, a glutton for everything, with a personality to almost everyone's taste.

Perhaps the greatest gift of "Baseball" is that it reanimates Ruth for generations of us who never had seen the play of emotions on his face. What a fabulous mug! Whether in still pictures or old films, Ruth always seems on the verge of the warmest, easiest smile, with a laugh to follow. You won't find malice from any angle. If any-

sick kids, grubstaked so many losers, signed so many autographs, laughed so hard, caused so many ulcers for his managers, broke so many traffic laws, made so many headlines, hit so many home runs in the World Series, or made so many people feel good. He only knew one answer to any question life might ask: "Yes"—especially if it meant he could help somebody, and especially if it was a kid or a guy who needed a hand up. For Ruth, the only way to get rid of a temptation was to yield to it.

"I swing big, with everything I've got," he liked to say. "I hit big or I miss big. I like to live as big as I can."

Waite Hoyt, a Hall-of-Famer, once wrote about the Babe, "While I can easily recognize all of [his crudity] and admit it freely, yet there was buried in Ruth humanitarianism beyond belief, an intelligence he was never given credit for; a childish desire to be over-virile, living up to credits given his home run power—and yet a need for intimate affection and respect, and a feverish desire to play baseball, perform, act, and live a life he didn't and couldn't take time to understand."

Ruth's simplicity serves as an excellent counterbalance to a testimonial so complex and clause-heavy. The Babe seldom tried to remember names; he just called everyone "Kid." After 11 years as Waite Hoyt's teammate, Ruth bade him farewell by saying, "Goodbye, Walter."

When social historians study the 20th century, perhaps only one American athlete will carry the same macroscopic importance as presidents, influential artists, and great scientists. Babe Ruth still matters.

In fact, Ruth seems to grow in retrospect. By comparison, we—and our times—tend to suffer. Listen to the modern athlete whine that he is "under a microscope"—and listen to us as we rush to agree with him.

No athlete ever was under a microscope like Ruth. He hit 714 home runs, many of them in the dead-ball era, which would be like a man hitting a hundred a season if he broke into the sport now. Everything Ruth did was news. His deeds and misdeeds were reported with presidential swiftness. Said Ruth's Boston teammate Harry Hooper of the Babe phenomenon, "I saw a man transformed into something pretty close to a god."

Despite serving as endless grist for the



The Babe's smile at once set him apart from the crowd and made him one with it.

gossip mill, Ruth loved the press and invited reporters with him everywhere. It's commonly said that the sports press of the 1920s covered up the indiscretions of athletes. Not Ruth's—his were too big. Trying to brush aside the Babe's morals was like trying to hide an elephant under a tablecloth. Ruth was forever being fined \$5,000 or suspended or kicked off his team for some outburst of temper or some escapade.

What made Ruth unique was not only that he shared his life with the public, but that he *wanted* to share it. He was of the people; he touched them, was gentle with their children, didn't stand above them, didn't charge \$20 for an autograph. That famous picture of Ruth—with only his head visible, bobbing above a sea of children—tells the story. He's smiling. He loves it. He's in no hurry.

These days we talk about athletes as "role models." In one sense, no one was a worse model for children than Ruth. The only vices he didn't have were the ones not yet invented. He'd drink beer if he couldn't get hard liquor, smoke cigarettes if he couldn't find a cigar, make love to one woman if he couldn't find two. He snorted snuff so hard doctors ordered him off the stuff because he was getting it into parts of his head where it didn't belong.

In another sense, no one was a better

example to the young than the Babe. We should not worry that he might be "a bad influence." Society always has been able to regulate behavior. After all, not many people have the nerve, or the need, to break too many laws. Even in the Roaring '20s, was anybody dumb enough to think he could get away with acting like Ruth?

The Babe served as a role model in a more basic and universal way. In everything he did, he trusted his humanity. If your heart was in the right place, his actions said, that made up for most of the rest. And his heart was in the right place. All of America recognized it, so the country accommodated him.

An example: Ruth was nabbed for driving too fast and let go a thousand times. On one occasion in 1921, however, he encountered the wrong policeman, and the wrong judge. He was ordered to serve a day in jail. Luckily, "a day" was defined as ending at 4 p.m., and the Yankees game that afternoon started at 3:15.

Were people ashamed for Ruth, or scandalized at his behavior? Are you kidding? Most people would have been proud to have a car wreck with the Babe. Word got out. Photographers tried to get a shot of Ruth behind bars. Ruth asked the Yankees to send his uniform to the jailhouse so he wouldn't have to waste time changing clothes when he got to the ballpark. Sure,



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The Bambino always had time for a kid in need—and later that night, for a lady or three.

when he got to the ballpark! Why not? What's driving a car too fast got to do with hitting a baseball?

The cops, bless their hearts, had things in perspective. They gave Ruth a high-speed motorcade across New York City—18 minutes from the slammer to the Polo Grounds, nine miles away. Did the Babe slink into the yard? Of course not. He changed his clothes in the car and strode through the center field gates bedecked in Yankees pinstripes.

The Yanks trailed when he arrived, then rallied to win. Ruth should have hit a home run but, somehow, didn't. How could the first and greatest of hotdogs have failed on such a stage? The pitcher must have rolled the ball behind him.

They say they don't make 'em like the Babe anymore. They say the world has changed, and we can't go back. Even on a ball field—much less anywhere else—life can't be simple, fun, reckless, incorrect, generous, and forgiving.

Yeah? Says who? Why can't our athletes, or we ourselves, regain some of the qualities that were most invigorating about the Babe? Granted, few sane people would want to be *just like* Babe Ruth. To the one person in a thousand whose appetites might resemble Ruth even slightly, our advice probably would be: Slow down, buddy, or you'll end up dead or in jail.

The problem is that, at least in our times, almost nobody is even a little bit like

Babe Ruth. We say "Ruthian" with the same sense of impossible distance from ourselves that we say "Herculean." Look around. Where are the joyful, good-hearted, homely, gluttonous, half-smart, trouble-making, creative public performers who want to live as big as they can? There isn't much that's Ruthian left in sports.

A hint of the Babe lurks in Charles Barkley. You could see it when Barkley devoured the international cafe scene at the 1992 Olympics in Barcelona, just too happy to sleep. Of course, it took the public 10 years to accept Barkley's public persona, and from the gun in his glove compartment to his barroom fights, Charles still scares us. His rules—to the degree he's figured them out—are not always our rules.

"Ruth recognized the difference between right and wrong," said former American League president Ford

Frick. "What he did not recognize, or could not accept, was the right of society to tell him what he should do, or not do." That's the edge, and the worry, with Barkley, too.

For years, Michael Jordan reveled in that shameless Ruthian lust for both heroic performance and the brightest possible spotlight; perhaps now, after goofing around in minor league baseball and recovering from his father's death and the jading effects of too much fame, Jordan can rediscover some of the innocence in his smile. Pete Rose may have had more Babe in him than anyone since the Babe. So Rose gambled on his team, ducked taxes, and went to jail—the man had hang-ups and may still, but don't treat him like a leper. Keep him out of the game, but put him in the Hall of Fame. And welcome him back into society.

We miss the Ruthian qualities in our games so much that sometimes we run the risk of being gullible. Is Deion Sanders an heir to the Babe? Or is Prime Time, like Madonna, a gifted but calculating self-promoter who practices his dance steps in private so they later can be mistaken for spontaneous delight?

The world offers us a vast range of possibilities. Centuries ago, Samuel Johnson said that a man ought to pursue a "multiplicity of consciousness," that he ought to expand his narrow perspective by studying other times,

other people, other fields of thought. Not merely in his sport, but in his life as a whole, Babe Ruth was one of those large, lopsided people who stretch our consciousness—although you can be damn sure he'd never have explained it in those terms.

We recently endured the most depressing year in the history of American sports. From Tonya Harding to the hockey lockout to the baseball strike, we've seen sports at its least joyful and least generous. As we celebrate the centennial of Babe Ruth's birth, we could do worse than turn to him for help, or at least advice.

Oh, the Babe had an answer—then and now. Asked why he'd had a party, why he'd wrecked a car, why he'd swung from the heels, he always offered the same words of wisdom:

"It may rain tomorrow." ■

THOMAS BOSWELL,
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AP/WIDE WORLD

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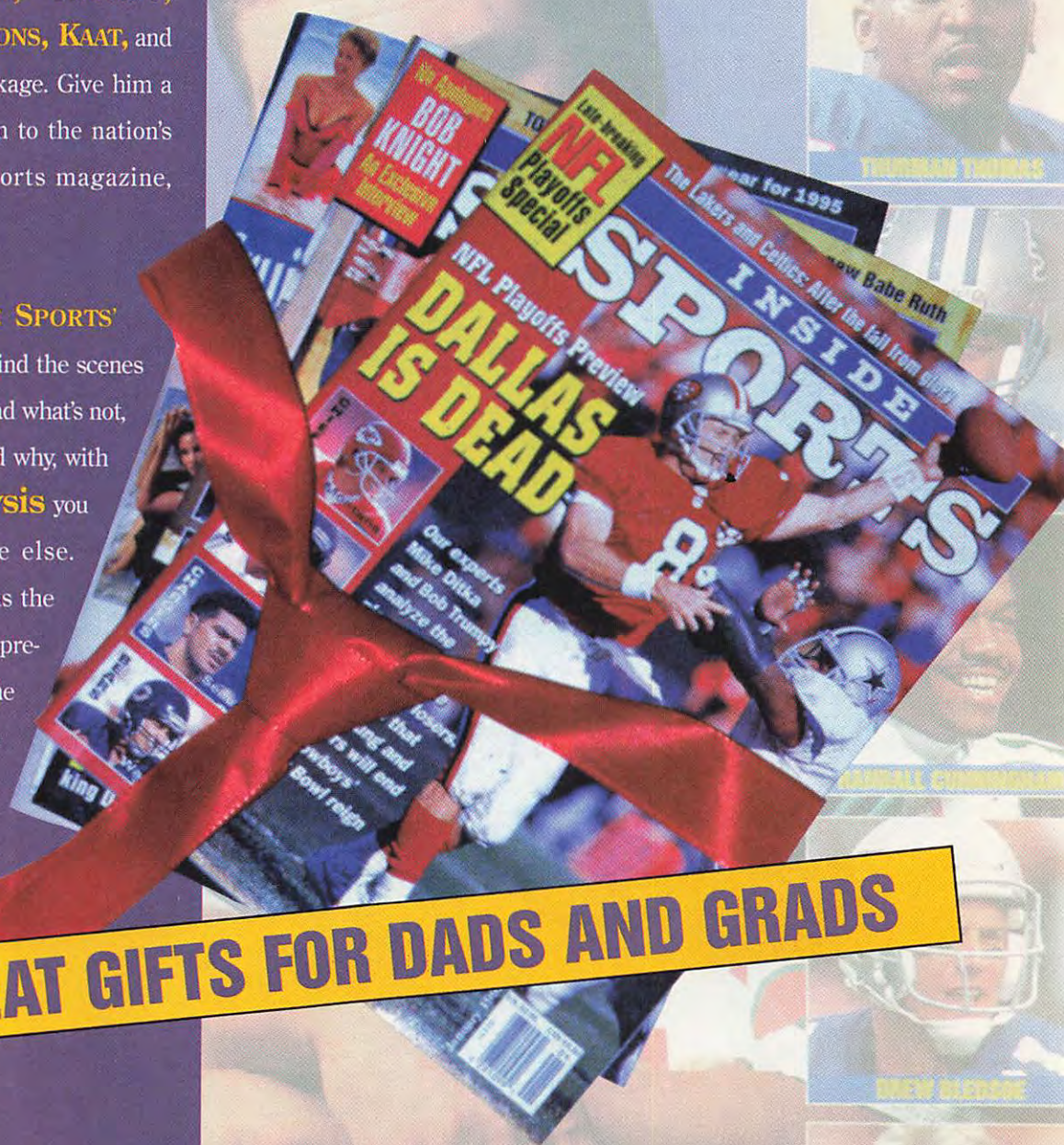
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ROBERT BROOKS: VL LOVERO

SUDDENLY, HOCKEY IS HIP. Why? You can point to Wayne Gretzky settling down in Los Angeles, and to master marketers bringing teams to Anaheim and Florida. It didn't hurt that the New York Rangers won the Stanley Cup last year, either; talk-show hosts were falling over themselves to book Rangers players after the team's historic Finals, and David Letterman did everything but pierce his ear and hang the Cup from it.

Whatever the reasons, hockey is hotter

early '80s, and who now are ready to carry the NHL past the year 2000. Who's the next Great One, the next Messier, the next Orr? Here are some nominations:

For the past 15 years, professional hockey has ridden on the bony shoulders of Wayne Gretzky. Throughout the world—and more importantly, in booming but hockey-starved regions ranging from the Carolinas to Arizona—the Great One has been the face of the NHL. However, Gretzky has no desire to be Gordie Howe.

gold medal performance in the 1992-93 World Junior Championships and silver medal showing at Lillehammer in '94.

Like Gretzky, Kariya dishes out passes from behind the goal like a blackjack dealer dealing out cards, and he's a natural playmaker. "If I want to do anything like Gretzky," says the Ducks left winger, "it's to think the game. I believe 90% of Wayne Gretzky's greatness is how he anticipates the game. That's what I would like to do."

Kariya's anticipation would be more evident if he had a better crew of players

GENERATION NEXT

As the NHL takes off, its biggest stars are fading out. Which young players will carry the torch of a burgeoning sport into the 21st century?

By AL MORGANTI

than it's ever been, and the NHL is making its move to attract Generation X. Rap groups more familiar with Ice T than Molson Ice sport hockey jerseys; rock stars who know Robin Leach but not Brian Leach prance around on stage in hockey caps.

To most of the under-25 crowd, Bobby Orr and Bobby Clarke are just names in the record book.

It's Mark Messier and his Lawn Boy haircut that look great on MTV. However, even the stars of the '80s are giving way to the next generation. Which players will head the charge?

For our purposes, the next generation comprises players 25 years old or younger—guys who might have grown up watching

the great New York Islanders and Edmonton Oilers teams of the late '70s and

Those television commercials and print ads he does with his son, Ty, are nice, but you won't see Gretzky *père* and *fils* skating on a line together at the Great Western Forum in the year 2010. Nope, Gretzky is winding down his legendary career, and the NHL needs someone to take his place—someone with the office presence as well as the on-ice talent. Someone with pizzazz. Someone the league can market. Someone who can be made bigger than life.

In truth, it's a fantasy to think you'll ever see another Gretzky—but, then, who's better at creating fairy tales than the folks at Disney? When you wish upon a hockey superstar, what you get from Disney's Anaheim Mighty Ducks is the Next Wayne Gretzky:

Paul Kariya, 20, Anaheim Mighty Ducks

Kariya has been the star at every level. In each of his two seasons with the Penticton Panthers he was named both British Columbia Junior Hockey League MVP and most sportsmanlike player. At the University of Maine in 1992-93 he was the first freshman ever to win the Hobey Baker Award as the best player in U.S. college hockey. That season Kariya scored 100 points in 39 games—with just *two* penalty minutes—and led Maine to the national championship; his three assists in the third period of the title game brought the Bears back from a 4-2 deficit to a 5-4 victory. Kariya anchored Team Canada's

around him. True, Gretzky entered the NHL with the expansion Edmonton Oilers, but that club quickly developed a nucleus of forwards that included Mark Messier, Jari Kurri, and Glenn Anderson. Nevertheless, as Kariya's career progresses, watch for him to rival Gretzky at creating goals—and goal-scorers. He's also working on a trademark move that would be an NHL first: switching the position of his hands during a play to shoot forehanded from either side.

Add Kariya's winning style to the marketing wizardry of Disney, and you have about the only combination that possibly could approach the impact expected of the Next Great One.

Honorable mention: Consider the spectacular two-way play and offensive genius of the Detroit Red Wings' Sergei Fedorov, who turned 25 in December, or the awesome potential of 21-year-old Quebec Nordiques rookie Peter Forsberg.

● ● ●

Turn Gretzky's No. 99 upside down and you get No. 66, the jersey worn by the Pittsburgh Penguins player who, when he was lucky enough to be healthy, turned the NHL upside down in the late '80s and early '90s. The hope around the league—and especially in Pittsburgh—is that the next Mario Lemieux will be, well, Mario Lemieux. That aside, though, you still don't

Kariya's penchant for precision passing recalls Gretzky's playmaking flair.

Cover photo credits: Paul Kariya by VJ. Loveruc; Rocky Widner.



Like Messier, Lindros combines skill with muscle and a certain relish for physical intimidation—a mix upon which champions are built.

have to leave Pittsburgh to see the Next Mario Lemieux:

Jaromir Jagr, 23, Pittsburgh Penguins

Jagr is showing all the signs that he's ready to emerge from Lemieux's shadow and blossom into a superstar. The 6'2", 210-pound right winger has the size, the strength, and the shot to reach the elite level, and over the course of his short career Jagr, in his fifth NHL season, has developed the savvy to put those talents together. His point total improved each of his first four years in the league, from 57 to 69 to 94 to 99. Without Lemieux in the lineup, Jagr is the Penguins' go-to player.

At the 1992 All-Star Game in Philadelphia, Lemieux said of Jagr: "I can beat guys one-on-one, maybe one-on-two. But sometimes I look at him, and he seems to think he can beat guys one-on-three—and then he does it."

Honorable mention: Alexei Yashin, 21, of the Ottawa Senators. **Long shot:** Viktor Kozlov, 20, of the San Jose Sharks. Kozlov, who was injured while playing in Europe during the NHL labor impasse, is 6'6" and

225 pounds. He isn't nearly as developed as Lemieux was at 20, but he has all the tools to flourish in the North American game.

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For all of Gretzky's greatness, and for all of Lemieux's skill, neither has been able to put on a show like "the Flower." There are those who never thought they'd see the day, but the NHL has in its midst the Next Guy Lafleur:

Pavel Bure, 24, Vancouver Canucks

If the Canucks winger took his helmet off and let his hair wave in the breeze, he'd cause the same stir the great Lafleur created when he wound up from behind his own net and zoomed coast to coast. Bure is one of the few players in the NHL who can pull fans out of their seats. The "Russian Rocket" should be blasting off for the Canucks well into the next decade.

Oh, yeah—Bure scored 154 regular-season goals and 27 playoff goals in his first three NHL seasons. In that same time span, Lafleur had 78 red lights in the regular season and four playoff goals—and both were 20 years old when they broke into the

NHL. Bure is so good that Vancouver had to bust its payroll parameters and give him \$25 million over six years. The Canucks are depending on him not only to get them back to the Finals, but also to sell out GM Place, their soon-to-open new arena.

Finesse is nice, but hockey still is a game played with a sneer. The top teams always have guys who would rather run through people than around them—which brings us to the burly forwards.

First, there is the role of the bull on skates, the Mark Messier-type leader who combines speed, strength, and menace. The lineage of tough guys extends from Gordie Howe through the man who has played for six Stanley Cup champions with the Oilers and Rangers, and leads to the Next Mark Messier:

Eric Lindros, 22, Philadelphia Flyers

Lindros entered the league with a "can't-miss" tag, but his impact has been blunted by injuries and the Flyers' failure to make the playoffs during his first two seasons. However, the early numbers are promising. Lindros had 85 goals and 87 assists in 126 games his first two seasons, an average of .67 goals per game. Not bad—especially when you consider that Gretzky's average also was .67 in his first two NHL seasons, and Lemieux's was .60.

"He's just going to get better and better," Flyers GM Bob Clarke says of his franchise center. "The first couple of years he was still what you might call 'boy strong'—you know, still growing up. When he gets into his mid-20s and gets into his peak years as a man, he's really going to be powerful."

•••

A step below the Messier level are some pretty strong bulls in their own right: power forwards, the guys who serve as the backbone of Stanley Cup champions. The first category is the tough guys who also can score a ton of goals. In many cases, these players take a while to figure out they're better off with their gloves on scoring goals than with their gloves off scoring points with the fight judges. In the fine tradition of Los Angeles Kings forward Rick Tocchet and Boston Bruins winger Cam Neely, we give you:

Keith Tkachuk, 23, Winnipeg Jets; and Bill Guerin, 24, New Jersey Devils

The role of bruising power forward traditionally was the exclusive domain of Canadian kids. Well, these two 6'2", 200-pound missiles hail from Massachusetts: Tkachuk is out of Melrose by way of Boston University, while Guerin is from Wilbraham and did his collegiate skating at the other end of Commonwealth Avenue, for Boston College.

Tkachuk has made his mark. He was

named captain of the Jets at age 21, and Winnipeg coach John Paddock has attempted to steer his team toward Tkachuk's muscular style and away from the flair of the Europeans who recently have danced at the Winnipeg Arena.

Guerin has further to go, but if the Devils develop into the premier team they are capable of becoming, he'll emerge as one of the NHL's top big men. He has earned his playoff stripes with a huge goal that gave the Devils a victory in Game 4 of their dramatic semifinal series with the Rangers last spring.

Remember, this type of player tends to develop a "touch" as he matures. The proof: Neely had just 37 goals and 70 points in his first two full seasons. Here's a statistical comparison:

FIRST TWO FULL NHL SEASONS

	Goals	Points	PIM
Rick Tocchet	28	74	465
Keith Tkachuk	69	132	456
Cam Neely	37	70	194
Bill Guerin	39	78	173

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Further down the scale you find the *real*-tough guys—players who throw their fists when needed and also score a goal now and then. What we really were looking

for were the Gen-X versions of Boston's Wayne Cashman or the Islanders' Clark Gillies—two guys who epitomized the type in the '70s and '80s—but no youngsters seem to have quite their combination of size, hands, and punching power. Instead, we bring you the Generation X-tremely tough versions of former Bruins bruiser Terry O'Reilly and former Islanders warhorse Bobby Nystrom:

Brad May, 23, Buffalo Sabres; and Brett Lindros, 19, New York Islanders

May, 6'1" and 210 pounds, scored the dramatic "May Day" goal at the Buffalo Auditorium in the 1993 postseason that got the Sabres to the second round for the first time in 10 years. He can score, and like O'Reilly and Nystrom, he doesn't mind throwing his hands to give his team an advantage—he amassed 309 penalty minutes his first season. May failed to score 20 goals in any of his first three seasons—his high was 18 last year—but O'Reilly scored just 15 goals in his third year in the NHL.

The darkhorse candidate as the next O'Reilly or Nystrom is the younger Lindros. Like his brother Eric, Brett boasts great size (6'4", 215) and a real zeal to bash opponents around the rink. His skills aren't nearly as refined as his brother's, but if he develops any sort of touch he might wind up following the footsteps of Gillies.

"We feel we got the better Lindros," said Isles GM Don Maloney when the team drafted Brett. That's hardly the case—Brett says, "I feel I can play in the NHL, but my hands aren't NHL-caliber"—but Maloney was right when he said that Lindros the younger brought with him the "character and leadership" the Isles needed. If the kid's hands improve, the Isles will have a throwback to the glory days. And whether he's a clone of Nystrom or of Gillies, the team will be delighted.

The joke goes like this: A Canadian dies, and he figures he's made it to heaven when he's standing alongside St. Peter at a hockey rink lined with clouds for boards. On the rink is a bearded guy on skates wearing No. 4. "Who's that?" asks the newest resident. "Oh, him? That's God," says St. Peter. "He thinks he's Bobby Orr."

Simply put, there are no Orrs skating around in the NHL—not at any age, let alone at 25 or younger. How about the Next Larry Robinson, an effective, durable combination of brains and muscle? Our pick:

Chris Pronger, 20, Hartford Whalers

The second pick in the 1993 entry draft, Pronger entered the NHL with the huge expectations that accompany a \$1.6 million contract. Most of the projections are based on his 6'5" frame, not the mere 205 pounds

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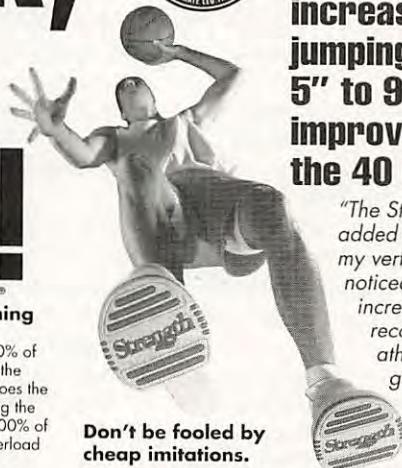
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Brodeur displays an almost uncanny resemblance to the masterful Roy, right down to his incredible stamina in the net.

he carried his rookie season. In his first year he tallied five goals, 25 assists, and 113 penalty minutes.

The Whalers hope Pronger will fill out as did Robinson, who played at 6'3" and 220 pounds. More important, they're banking their future on the hope that he will play as physical and as smart as Robinson did. The Whalers expect Pronger to be the same sort of intimidating player who forces turnovers at the blue line and then jumps into the play.

"People forget that with defensemen it takes a while," says stalwart Boston Bruins backliner Ray Bourque. "I've watched Pronger for only one season, but you can see he's going to be a player. A great player like Larry Robinson? He's got the size. Let's give him time to fill out, time to develop. People forget how young he is."

To put things in perspective, Pronger was in the NHL as a 19-year-old; Robinson entered the league at 22. In other words, Pronger will have three full NHL seasons to develop before he reaches the age at which Robinson broke into the NHL in '73.

Pronger is a case study in why NHL

GMs campaigned to raise the age limit of the amateur draft from 18 to 20, with 18- and 19-year-olds given the opportunity to opt into the selection process. Says Bourque, "I think for defensemen, the 20-year-old draft makes much more sense."

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On the other side of the defensive spectrum is the guy with the wheels who simply skates the puck out of trouble. He may not be overwhelming as a defender, but he's just so fast he can get himself out of a jam. In other words, the Next Paul Coffey:

Oleg Tverdokvsky, 18, Anaheim Mighty Ducks

The scouting report on Tverdokvsky was simple: "Great wheels. Great offensive skills. Needs to learn defense." Anaheim GM Jack Ferreira says Tverdokvsky is "the offensive defenseman every championship team has—a Leetch, a Bourque." Or a Coffey, who has won Cups with two teams.

Tverdokvsky, who's 6'0" and 183 pounds but eventually figures to play at a rugged 215, is a genuine student of the game; he watched tapes of Orr to prepare mentally for the NHL. The Ducks will have to walk a

fine line in developing their 18-year-old Russian, and they'll have to live with his mistakes, but with his raw talent and his zest for hockey, the Ducks have a real keeper.

What's that? The Ducks have the next Wayne Gretzky in Paul Kariya and the next Paul Coffey? If so, where are these guys going after they win their first Cup? They already live in Disneyland.

•••

What a team really needs from a defenseman is something you never can project from an 18- or 19-year-old: the balance of offense and defense over the long haul that is the hallmark of Bourque, or the long-term tenacity and toughness embodied by Scott Stevens. Though longevity is tough to predict, two with a chance to be the Next Ray Bourque are **Scott Niedermayer**, 21, a kid who at times plays alongside Stevens in New Jersey; and Los Angeles Kings defenseman **Rob Blake**, 25, who has one of the heaviest shots in the NHL.

And the Next Scott Stevens? How about Kevin Hatcher's "little" brother, 22-year-old **Derian Hatcher** of the Dallas Stars. Or last summer's first selection in the draft, rugged **Ed Jovanovski**, 18, property of the Florida Panthers.

Goaltender is arguably the most important position in all of team sports. The hockey goaltender is the guy—sorry, Manon, the *person*—who can turn a poor team into a tough foe, a mediocre team into a champion, or a terrific team into roadkill.

So you want to know who will be the Next Ken Dryden, right? Forget it. Maybe somebody can don a No. 29 jersey and lean over his stick to look like the Canadiens great, but there isn't a goalie under 25—or over 25, for that matter—who plays Dryden's Big Goalie game. So with a nod to established over-25 netminders Mike Richter, Eddie Belfour, Dominik Hasek, and Arturs Irbe, we hereby dub the Next Patrick Roy:

Martin Brodeur, 22, New Jersey Devils

If you put Brodeur in a Canadiens uniform, plenty of fans at the Montreal Forum—and more than a few players on the ice, too—probably would think they were seeing Roy. Like so many French Canadian netminders of the new generation, Brodeur was schooled by the legendary Francois Allaire, the same goalie instructor who launched Roy's career.

Roy and Brodeur are similar in build—Roy is 6'0", Brodeur 6'1", both weigh about 200 pounds—and physical strength is the most underrated aspect of their games. "The key to success is being able to keep up with the game east to west," says

former New York Rangers goalie John Davidson, now a TV color analyst. "Like Roy, Brodeur can get across the crease, and they both have the stamina to keep getting back up and staying strong throughout the game."

In just one season Brodeur put his stamp on the NHL, winning the Calder Trophy as rookie of the year for 1993-94, and then topping it off with an astounding postseason in which he had a 1.95 goals-against average over 17 games. For eerie first-year comparisons, try these rookie stats:

PATRICK ROY (age 20, 1985-86)

Regular Season			Playoffs		
GP	W-L-T	GAA	GP	W-L-T	GAA
47	3-18-3	3.35	20	15-5	1.92

MARTIN BRODEUR (age 21, 1993-94)

Regular Season			Playoffs		
GP	W-L-T	GAA	GP	W-L-T	GAA
47	27-11-8	2.40	17	8-9	1.95

Honorable mention: Stephane Fiset, 24, Quebec Nordiques; Felix Potvin, 23, Toronto Maple Leafs; Jamie Storr, 19, Los Angeles Kings; Blaine Lacher, 24, Boston Bruins.

Generation X is famous for its diversions, so here's a potpourri of others to watch:

The Next Al MacInnis (player with a slapshot around which you can build a power play): **Philippe Boucher, 22, Buffalo Sabres**. Boucher has little chance of reaching the All-Star caliber of MacInnis, but if he earns a regular spot on a team with Alex Mogilny and a healthy Pat LaFontaine, he could tee up a power play with his awesome slapper.

The Next Claude Lemieux (most despised opponent in the NHL): **Darius Kasparaitis, 22, New York Islanders**. This 5'11" bundle of spite shoved the normally untouchable Mario Lemieux around in a playoff series. He doesn't care who the opponent is—he just gets in his face. If Casper can clean up his off-ice act and get his mind into the game more than 80% of the time, he could be a pain in the butt to rival Claude Lemieux or even Dale Hunter.

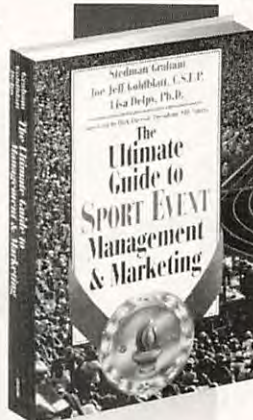
The Next Doug Wickenheiser (highly touted draft pick who'll break your heart): **Markus Naslund, 21, Pittsburgh Penguins**. If you want to know why the NHL needed a hard rookie salary cap and mandatory two-way contracts for first-year players, consider that Naslund had four goals and 11 points in 71 games last season—at a cost of \$900,000. ■

ESPN NHL analyst AL MORGANTI has covered hockey in print and on TV and radio since 1975.

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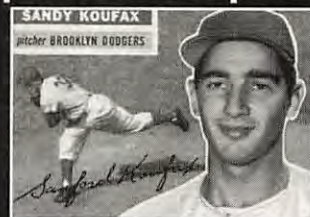
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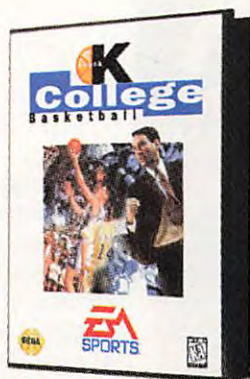




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THE NICE THING ABOUT STEVE Young and Shaquille O'Neal is that they make you want to talk sports at the office. The nice thing about Nicole Miller is that she lets you wear sports at the office.

Since the fashion designer's first sports-themed tie hit the market nine years ago, men eagerly have been breaking the paisley monotony by donning her clever patterns. Like the offerings from Brooks Brothers, Miller's ties are silk, handmade, and—at about \$60—not cheap. The comparison ends there. Look a little closer, and in lieu of stripes or checks you might see a map of Arizona noting all the Cactus League cities, an official Spalding NBA basketball, or Franklin Roosevelt throwing out the first pitch of the 1936 major league baseball season.

"I think they're all about men's obsessions, men's hob-

life. Her cosmetic surgery tie is complete with "before" and "after" illustrations.

Such insouciance is part of the attraction. Andy MacPhail was wearing a "Fly Ball" tie—a typically wry Nicole Miller creation that depicts a baseball with a fly on it—on the day last fall when he was introduced to the media as the new president of the Chicago Cubs. He also wore it during negotiations during the strike. "In baseball you don't want to get too formal," MacPhail says. "It's a game, and when you wear a suit you

Princesses TIE

**Nicole Miller's witty paeans
to the world and words of sports have
earned her some major league fans**
By NOAH LIBERMAN

bies, the things men love," says the 44-year-old Miller. "Whether it's sports, their vices, whatever—that's what the ties have all been about."

For most of Miller's 20-year design career, her work has been all about women. She earned respect for designing *couture* clothes that women actually could afford, and she firmly joined the fashion elite with a successful runway debut in 1990. The neckwear designs began purely as a lark, when she used the silk fabric from an unsuccessful dress print to create a few dozen ties. Now Miller offers ties, blazers, and other accessories with themes drawn from professions such as law and medicine, "vices" such as gambling and drinking, and many other facets of

want to express the game's informality. The tie's a vehicle to do that."

Informality isn't the only reason Miller sold \$15 million worth of ties last year. Men analyze every detail of her designs, and they seem to like what they find. For one, though her style is witty and informal, her athletes have perfect sports form: Her golfers finish high; her batters stay back and hit to the opposite field; her skiers keep their hips low. "A

lot of times we'll take a little pose from a reference, rather than just making it up," Miller says. "We like to be legitimate, for real, so we do a lot of research."

This research turns up plenty of tidbits to satisfy the serious fan. One of Miller's Indianapolis 500 designs, for example, features a map of the Speedway, detailed down to the garages, press area, and infield hospital.

Miller sweats the details because she knows her customers do. One of her first sports ties featured three basketball players, one in a green and white No. 33 uniform—clearly Larry Bird. However, all the players' faces were done in the color black, in what company CEO







STEPHEN GREEN

"You want to express informality," says MacPhail. "A tie's a way to do that."

Bud Konheim calls an "art decision" based exclusively the fall color palette Miller was using. Fearing bad publicity, Bloomingdale's decided not to run an ad it had planned for the tie, but the store did offer it for sale—and sold out. In fact, all 800 of the ties made from that print were sold, and Konheim began getting calls from collectors offering \$750 and \$1,000 for the tie. "If I'd had it I would have sold it for 60 bucks, not a thousand," he says.

The "Larry Bird tie," as it's known, is a collector's dream, but each of Miller's ties actually is something of a collectible, as there never are more than 1,200 made from any print. As a result, tie mavens frequently call her boutiques asking for updates on the availability of old designs and information on new ones.

The devotion of her clientele has helped the Manhattan-based company grow to an estimated \$50 million in annual business. It's no surprise that Miller's ties show a definite awareness that sports,

too, is a big business. Smack in the middle of one of her football prints is a dollar bill; inside the bill is a television; and on the TV is a hand hoisting a mug of beer. The word "Advertisement" stretches across the bottom of the bill.

Miller's understanding of sports is aided by the fact that she's done business with nearly every major U.S. sports organization. She has designed ties for all the major professional leagues and for up-and-coming outfits such as the

International Hockey League. She's done Spalding ties, a Virginia Slims Tennis tie, a Miller Beer tie, and an Olympic sponsors tie. But unlike traditional licensees, who must jump through hoops for the rights to adorn their products with a coveted logo, Miller usually is approached by the organizations. Frequently, the resulting ties never make it to market—they're commissioned solely for the private, non-commercial use of an organization's bigwigs.

From her privileged position as the sports world's designated neckwear designer, Miller is willing to talk frankly about the leagues' difficulty with their success. "I think the whole money thing has gotten very complicated, and I think they get caught up in a lot of red tape and bureaucracy," she says. "Sometimes they can't get out of their own way."

When they do, however, they do business with Miller. Her relationship with Major League

Baseball is especially close, involving not only ties—she recently completed her 12th baseball pattern—but her work on behalf of the Baseball Assistance Team, which benefits retired ballplayers in tough financial straits. The relationship is strong because Miller has been very good for baseball. "So many licensees just take the rights we give them and slap the MLB logo on their product,"

says Karyn Donohue, licensing manager for MLB Properties. "She's gone a step beyond that, which is kind of refreshing for us." Donohue credits Miller's stature as a designer with helping to get the ties into better department stores and specialty clothing stores—a boon for the sport. And the nostalgic tone of many of her patterns has attracted an older, more affluent fan.

She also has young, hip fans, however. New York Knicks guard John Starks has dozens of Miller's ties, and Miller has an autographed picture of Starks in her Garment District office that reads, "To Nicole: Thanks for the 'Stuff' John Starks."

Considering how much sports paraphernalia clogs store shelves today, you have to wonder why Miller's wares are so popular with fans and athletes alike. Perhaps it's because, unlike the competition, they suggest a woman's point of view. Tucked into one of her football patterns, for example, is an illustration of a player's muscular backside. Underneath, a tiny caption reads, "No doubt about what position he plays!" The slightly impressionistic illustration style and brilliant palette—Miller uses as many as 18 colors in one tie—also might suggest a woman's approach.

The words scattered throughout Miller's patterns also offer an atypical take on sports. For most male sports fans, the arcane language of games—"on-side kick," "backdoor slider"—comes naturally. By contrast, here is Miller's charmingly off-kilter take on sportscaster-speak: "Welcome Folks! To the Monday Night Game! Well, I'll tell ya, Phil, it just doesn't get much more All-American than this...." And it's a rare male baseball fan who hears the term "fly ball" and thinks of a fly on a ball.

In the final analysis, maybe men go for Miller's ties because they prove there's at least one woman out there who thinks it's attractive that men are sports fans. It's a sweet deal for Miller, too; she's become something of an expert on men's hobbies and obsessions. As she deadpans, "Of course, I had to do a lot of research. I always thought that's why I haven't got married, because I have to do so much research." ■

Associate editor NOAH LIBERMAN spilled coffee on his Larry Bird tie.



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NUMBERS

QUARTERBACK FACTORIES: QUANTITY VS. QUALITY

Here's an analysis of college football programs based on their ability to produce quarterbacks who have staying power in the NFL, defined here as at least 500 career NFL passing attempts. The list on the left includes all the schools that have produced at least two quarterbacks who have thrown 500 NFL passes. But quantity isn't everything; the chart below includes schools with at least three long-term NFL QBs, ranked by the combined NFL passer rating of the schools' qualifying passers. The third chart ranks college conferences by the number of long-term NFL QBs they have produced, and gives the combined NFL passer rating for the conference alums.

College	No.
Alabama	7
Notre Dame	7
USC	7
Purdue	6
Stanford	6
Illinois	5
Miami	5
UCLA	5
Brigham Young	4
LSU	4
Maryland	4
Oregon	4
Rice	4
Washington	4
Washington State	4
Arizona State	3
Baylor	3
California	3
Georgia	3
Michigan State	3
Pacific	3
Penn State	3
Arkansas	2
Boston College	2
Delaware	2
Duke	2
Florida	2
Florida State	2
Grambling State	2
Kansas	2
Kansas State	2
Kentucky	2
Louisiana Tech	2
Louisville	2
Massachusetts	2
New Mexico State	2
North Carolina State	2
Northeast Louisiana	2
Pittsburgh	2
San Diego State	2
SMU	2
Tennessee	2
Texas Christian	2
Utah State	2
Virginia	2
Youngstown State	2

No.	College	Atts.	Comp.	Yds.	TDs	Ints.	Rating
4	Brigham Young	7,863	4,544	57,425	355	291	80.3
5	Miami	11,995	6,880	84,495	502	433	78.1
4	Oregon	12,078	6,813	92,018	594	570	77.6
4	Washington	8,251	4,788	59,183	305	309	77.0
7	Notre Dame	16,116	9,062	113,386	752	660	76.7
6	Purdue	15,279	8,580	109,701	747	718	75.5
4	Maryland	7,592	4,177	53,683	327	297	75.5
3	Georgia	8,474	4,692	60,695	425	426	73.8
3	California	8,160	4,434	57,943	379	395	72.3
4	Washington State	4,850	2,661	31,662	194	189	72.1
4	LSU	11,888	6,555	83,729	539	585	72.0
6	Stanford	15,571	8,532	107,608	635	680	71.9
3	Arizona State	6,107	3,356	41,548	264	276	71.8
5	UCLA	10,285	5,580	69,823	470	476	71.5
7	Alabama	15,524	8,446	113,099	705	853	70.0
5	Illinois	7,252	3,939	46,799	239	299	68.0
3	Penn State	4,078	2,126	27,992	181	211	67.4
4	Rice	9,572	4,860	65,222	493	531	66.8
7	USC	8,903	4,583	62,222	366	473	65.7
3	Michigan State	4,944	2,464	35,650	259	308	65.2
3	Pacific	4,241	2,103	30,392	227	273	64.3
3	Baylor	3,028	1,416	20,209	124	164	59.9

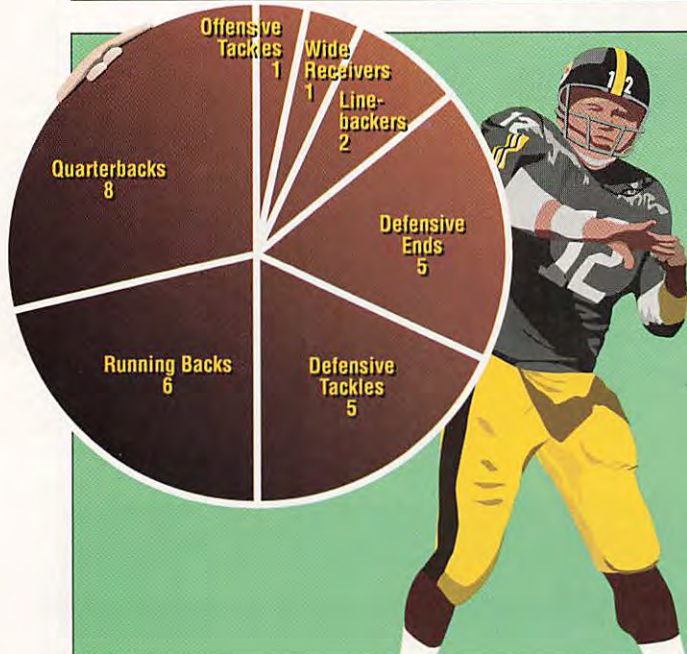
No.	Conference	Atts.	Comp.	Yds.	TDs	Ints.	Rating
36	Pacific-10	74,205	40,747	522,007	3,207	3,368	72.6
25	Southeastern	56,246	29,736	392,492	2,650	3,070	68.2
20	Big Ten	35,976	19,655	255,147	1,632	1,754	72.0
15	Atlantic Coast	28,274	15,128	193,854	1,241	1,237	71.6
15	Independent	36,292	20,066	259,784	1,714	1,530	76.2
14	Southwest	25,802	13,112	176,755	1,269	1,447	66.0
11	Big East	22,712	12,983	160,951	1,021	822	79.2
11	Big West	24,750	13,210	171,698	1,134	1,202	70.5
6	Big Eight	14,809	7,734	105,877	697	840	67.4
6	Western Athletic	12,226	6,977	87,485	544	518	76.6
4	Southland	6,768	3,677	46,823	262	270	72.5
4	Yankee	5,034	2,637	32,565	187	238	65.4
2	Ivy	1,725	878	11,134	66	90	62.4
2	Lone Star	3,530	1,928	25,461	142	184	69.3
2	Southern	1,598	779	10,126	54	85	58.2

Note: Penn State, which joined the Big Ten in 1993, was considered an independent for this analysis.

BETTER THAN AVERAGE

Twenty active NBA players had career highs of at least 50 points through the 1995 All-Star break. Here's a comparison of their career scoring averages entering '94-95 (left) with their career highs (right):

David Robinson	25.3	71
Karl Malone	26.0	61
Tom Chambers	19.3	60
Reggie Miller	19.3	57
Dominique Wilkins	26.5	57
Michael Adams	15.5	54
Willie Burton	10.1	53
Dale Ellis	17.5	53
Moses Malone	20.9	53
Shaquille O'Neal	26.4	53
Terry Cummings	20.1	52
Hakeem Olajuwon	23.7	52
Charles Smith	16.3	52
Patrick Ewing	23.8	51
Vernon Maxwell	13.8	51
Nick Anderson	16.1	50
Cedric Ceballos	11.6	50
Clyde Drexler	20.7	50
Jim Jackson	18.5	50
Jamal Mashburn	19.2	50



ARMING FOR BATTLE

Eight quarterbacks have been selected No. 1 overall in the NFL draft since 1967. Four of those—Terry Bradshaw, Jim Plunkett, John Elway, and Troy Aikman—have started in the Super Bowl (though Plunkett and Elway didn't go with their original teams). Defensive linemen also attract attention: Five ends and five tackles have gone No. 1. Here's a breakdown of NFL No. 1 overall draft picks from 1967 to 1994, by position and school:

School	No.	School	No.
USC	3	Michigan State	1
Auburn	2	Nebraska	1
Miami	2	Notre Dame	1
Ohio State	2	South Carolina	1
Oklahoma	2	Tampa	1
Stanford	2	Tennessee State	1
Texas	2	UCLA	1
California	1	Virginia Tech	1
Illinois	1	Washington	1
Louisiana Tech	1	Washington State	1

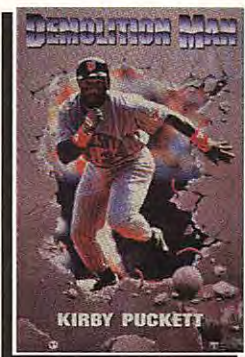
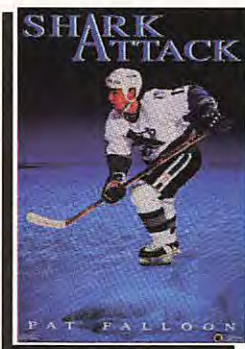
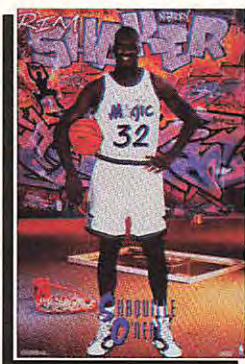
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CHARLOTTE HORNETS/Alonzo Mourning - JAM SESSION
DALLAS MAVERICKS/Jimmy Jackson - JAM SESSION
DALLAS MAVERICKS/Jamal Mashburn - MONSTER MASH
DENVER NUGGETS/Laphonso Ellis - HIGH ALTITUDE
DETROIT PISTONS/Joe Dumars - HIGH PERFORMANCE
GOLDEN STATE WARRIORS/Chris Mullin - OUTER LIMITS
GOLDEN STATE WARRIORS/Tim Hardaway - THE HARDER
GOLDEN STATE WARRIORS/Chris Webber - HIGH IMPACT
HOUSTON ROCKETS/1994 NBA WORLD CHAMPIONS - MISSION ACCOMPLISHED
LOS ANGELES CLIPPERS/Ron Harper - DRIVING FORCE
MIAMI HEAT/Glen Rice - GREAT BALLS OF FIRE
MIAMI HEAT/Harold Miner - JAM SESSION
NBA SLAM DUNK CHAMPIONS - 1984-1993
NEW JERSEY NETS/Kenny Anderson - MAGNIFICENT 7
NEW YORK KNICKS/Starks, Smith, Ewing, Oakley & Harper - SKYSCRAPERS
NEW YORK KNICKS/Patrick Ewing - JAM SESSION
NEW YORK KNICKS/John Starks - UNTAMED FURY
ORLANDO MAGIC/Arnette Hardaway - PENNY
ORLANDO MAGIC/Shaquille O'Neal - JAM SESSION
ORLANDO MAGIC/Shaquille O'Neal - RIM SHAKER
PHOENIX SUNS/Charles Barkley - DESERT STORM
PORTLAND TRAIL BLAZERS/Clyde Drexler - JAM SESSION
PORTLAND TRAIL BLAZERS/Cliff Robinson - CLIFF HANGER
SACRAMENTO KINGS/Mitch Richmond - SCORELORD
SAN ANTONIO SPURS/David Robinson - JAM SESSION
SEATTLE SUPERSONICS/Shawn Kemp - REIGN MAN
UTAH JAZZ/Karl Malone - JAM SESSION
UTAH JAZZ/John Stockton - POINT BREAK

MLB

ATLANTA BRAVES/Dave Justice - AND JUSTICE FOR ALL
BALTIMORE ORIOLES/Ripken, Jr., Anderson & Palmeiro - BIRDS OF PREY
BOSTON RED SOX/Roger Clemens - ROCKET
CHICAGO WHITE SOX/Tim Lincecum - ROCK OF AGES
CHICAGO WHITE SOX/Frank Thomas - BIG BANG THEORY
CHICAGO WHITE SOX/Robin Ventura - HOT CORNER
CINCINNATI REDS/Barry Larkin - RED DAWN
CINCINNATI REDS/Deion Sanders - SPEED
CLEVELAND INDIANS/Baerga, Balle & Lofton - THE TRIBE
COLORADO ROCKIES/Andre Galaraga - THE BIG CAT
COLORADO ROCKIES/David Nied - THE NIED FOR SPEED
DETROIT TIGERS/Cecil Fielder - BIG DADDY
FLORIDA MARLINS/Benito Santiago - THOU SHALT NOT STEAL
HOUSTON ASTROS/Swindell, Harnisch & Drabek - SHOOTING STARS
LOS ANGELES DODGERS/Mike Piazza - HARD TARGET
MINNESOTA TWINS/Kirby Puckett - KIRBY
NEW YORK METS/Bobby Bonilla - THE AMAZIN' MET
NEW YORK YANKEES/Jim Abbott - KING OF THE HILL
PHILADELPHIA PHILLIES/John Kruk - THE ALMIGHTY KRUK
PITTSBURGH PIRATES/Andy Van Slyke - PIRATES TREASURE
SEATTLE MARINERS/Ken Griffey, Jr. - G-FORCE
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TEXAS RANGERS/Will Clark - IRON WILL
TORONTO BLUE JAYS/Roberto Alomar - 2ND TO NONE

NFL

BUFFALO BILLS/Thurman Thomas - THURMANATOR II
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NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS/Drew Bledsoe - PATRIOT GAMES
PITTSBURGH STEELERS/Barry Foster - STEEL WHEELS
PITTSBURGH STEELERS/Neil O'Donnell - QUARTERBACK CLUB
SAN DIEGO CHARGERS/Junior Seau - SHOCK TREATMENT
SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS/Rickey Walters - RAGING WATERS
SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS/Jerry Rice - ELITE
SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS/Steve Young - RUN & GUN
SEATTLE SEAHAWKS/Rick Mirer - NATURAL WONDER
WASHINGTON REDSKINS/Desmond Howard - DAWN OF A NEW ERA

NBA DOOR-SIZE (26x74)

CHARLOTTE HORNETS/Alonzo Mourning - RUDE AWAKENING
NEW YORK KNICKS/Patrick Ewing
ORLANDO MAGIC/Shaquille O'Neal - TOWER OF POWER
PHOENIX SUNS/Charles Barkley
SAN ANTONIO SPURS/David Robinson
SEATTLE SUPERSONICS/Shawn Kemp - SLAM DANCE

DREAM TEAM II

SHAWN KEMP - USA BASKETBALL
DAN MAJERLE - USA BASKETBALL
LARRY JOHNSON - USA BASKETBALL
DOMINIQUE WILKINS - USA BASKETBALL
ALONZO MOURNING - USA BASKETBALL
SHAQUILLE O'NEAL - USA BASKETBALL
DERRICK COLEMAN - USA BASKETBALL

NHL

ANAHEIM MIGHTY DUCKS/Hebert, Loney, Yake, Ewen & Semenov - QUACK ATTACK
BOSTON BRUINS/Ray Bourque - SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
BUFFALO SABRES/Alexander Mogilny - ALEXANDER THE GREAT
CALGARY FLAMES/Theoren Fleury - FIRE ON ICE
CHICAGO BLACKHAWKS/Chelios, Roenick, Belfour & Murphy - BLACK MAGIC
DALLAS STARS/Mike Modano - STARMAN
DETROIT RED WINGS/Sergei Federov - FROM RUSSIA WITH LOVE
EDMONTON OILERS/Bill Ranford - SAVING GRACE
FLORIDA PANTHERS/John Vanbiesbrouck - PREDATOR
LOS ANGELES KINGS/Wayne Gretzky - WAYNE'S WORLD
LOS ANGELES KINGS/Tony Granato - BLADE RUNNER
MONTREAL CANADIENS/Kirk Muller - CAPTAIN KIRK
NEW YORK ISLANDERS/Pierre Turgeon - FRENCH CONNECTION
NEW YORK RANGERS/Mark Messier - THE ICE WARRIOR
OTTAWA SENATORS/Alexandre Daigle - THE ICEMAN COMETH
PHILADELPHIA FLYERS/Eric Lindros - FORCE
PITTSBURGH PENGUINS/Mario Lemieux - ROUTE 66
QUEBEC NORDIQUES/Joe Sakic - SHARP SHOOTER
SAN JOSE SHARKS/Pat Falloon - SHARK AT TACK
ST. LOUIS BLUES/Brett Hull - THE GOLDEN BRETT
TAMPA BAY LIGHTNING/Roman Hamrlik - HAMR TIME
TORONTO MAPLE LEAFS/Doug Gilmour - KILLER INSTINCT
VANCOUVER CANUCKS/Pavel Bure - RUSSIAN ROCKET
WINNIPEG JETS/Teemu Selanne - JET POWERED

COLLEGIATE POSTERS

FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY SEMINOLES - Football
UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI HURRICANES - Football
UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA CRIMSON TIDE - Football
UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA GATORS - Football
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN WOLVERINES - Basketball
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THE GOOD DOCTOR

What did Indiana basketball coach Bobby Knight wear: (a) at his wedding, (b) to the beach, (c) on the cover of GQ, and (d) to his high school prom?

I.U., RIO RANCHO, N.M.

(A) A red sweater, (b) a red sweater, (c) a red sweater, and (d) a red sweater.

Greedy is killing sports, Doc. Can things get any worse?

C.B., MOUNTAIN BROOK, ALA.

I didn't think so, but after this year's Super Bowl the Bud Bowl beer bottles went on strike.

People in the nation's capital want to rename the Washington Bullets. What do they want to call them?

N.G., PORTSMOUTH, VA.

The Washington Blanks.

I heard the University of Colorado considered joining the Pacific-10 Conference before deciding to remain in the Big 8. What was so tempting about the Pac-10?

R.N., PAPILLION, NEB.

The thought of playing against national football powers like Oregon.

Can you tell the difference between a Cleveland Cavalier and Bozo the Clown?

B.Z., CANAL FULTON, OHIO

Not by their clothes.

My wife asked me to ask you where Hannah Storm of NBC Sports gets her hair done.

G.G., BALLSTON SPA, N.Y.

She goes to the Pete Rose Hair Salon for Men and Women.

Oklahoma landed Howard Schnellenberger as its new football coach. What will he do to improve the Sooners' record?

D.C., FORT THOMAS, KY.

Schedule Louisville.

I know there's a TV show called "20/20," but I'm more interested in the year 2020. Predict the future for me, Doctor.

R.H., ROOSEVELT, UTAH

All righty. In the year 2020, I see a permanent manned station on the moon. I see cures for every major disease. I see computers doing most of the work we do today. And I see Karl Malone and John Stockton still playing for the Jazz.

What's Mike Schmidt going to say in his induction speech at the baseball Hall of Fame this summer?

P.P., BENWOOD, W.VA.

He might not speak at all. Mike's still waiting for Steve Carlton to finish his speech.

How would you say Pat Riley has influenced Patrick Ewing?

C.O., CHILI CENTER, N.Y.

Judging by their appearance, I'd say they influenced each other. Ewing now slicks back his hair, wears white shirts and Armani suits, and writes books on motivation. Riley wears a flat-top hairdo and a gray undershirt under his Knicks jersey.

I'm a big Stephen King fan. What's his book "Insomnia" about?

B.F., CALEXICO, CALIF.

Coaching the Clippers.



"Thanks for taking me today, Pete—especially with Prince Valiant waiting."

Maybe you know, Doc: Who won baseball's Japan Series last season?

P.G., ORIENT, N.Y.

The Toronto Blue Jays. Those people have absolutely no respect for international boundaries.

Could you tell me who won't be going on the Eagles' big concert tour this year?

R.C., FORTY FORT, PA.

Rich Kotite.

Paul Westhead, former coach of the Los Angeles Lakers and Loyola Marymount, now is in charge of the basketball program at George Mason. Where exactly is George Mason?

E.J., HYBLA VALLEY, VA.

The real question is, who exactly is George Mason?

Did radio celebrity Howard Stern really save some New York guy from jumping off a bridge?

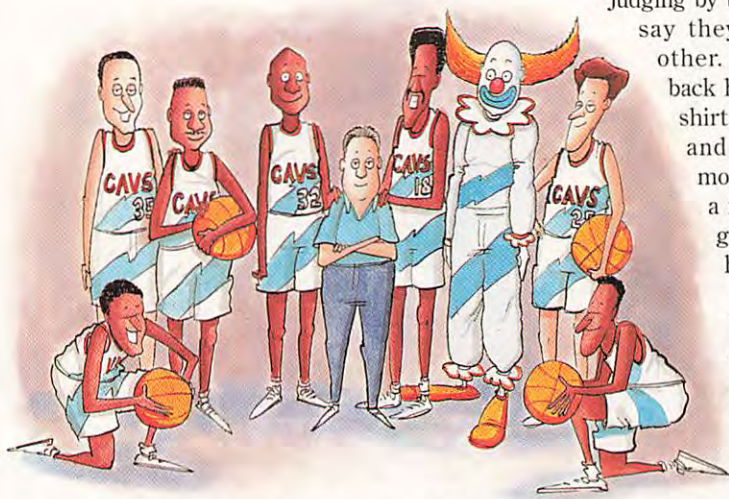
S.J., CHEEKTOWAGA, N.Y.

Oh, I don't think the Jets were really going to jump.

Greg Norman is proposing a new pro golf tour. What does he want more of?

T.W., ROCK ISLAND, ILL.

Crowd noise.



The Cavs' new guy fits in perfectly—right down to the spiffy duds.

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In my opinion, Charlie Steiner of ESPN does an excellent job on boxing. Is he an expert?

L.M., BELTSVILLE, MD.

Sure is. Charlie flourished in the ring for years, until the Nevada state commission made him shave his beard and remove his glasses.

Roy Firestone no longer is hosting "Up Close" on ESPN. What's his new interview show called?

C.M., HAVRE, MONT.

"Farther Away."

Doc, did you have an image in your mind of major league baseball players on strike?

M.P., FARMERS BRANCH, TEXAS

Well, I did picture what they'd look like with their picket signs. Ozzie Smith choked up slightly, Barry Bonds wiggled his slightly, Don Mattingly bent a little at the knees, and Mike Piazza preferred a more open stance.

In all your travels, who was the greatest bullfighter you ever saw?

L.A., BERNALILLO, N.M.

It's a tie between Jerry Sloan and Norm Van Lier.

I demand an apology. Although I missed the issue in question, a friend told me your 1994-95 March Madness preview made a reference to "cretins in Nebraska." Well, sir, our neighbors are anything but cretins. They deserve more respect!

W.R., BELLE FOURCHE, S.D.

What we said was, "Creighton's in Nebraska." We apologize anyway.

Doc, tell us about Afternoon Deelites, the horse owned by Burt Bacharach.

D.W., LIVERMORE, CALIF.

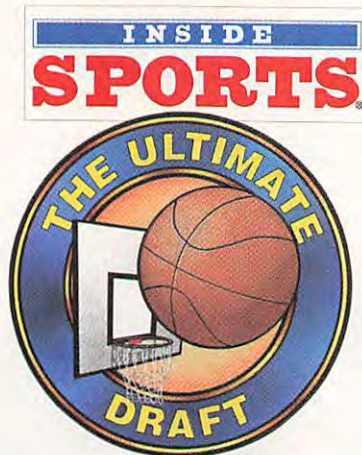
This thoroughbred knows how to win at Santa Anita but doesn't have a clue about the way to San Jose.

What's the new biggest seller at baseball souvenir shows?

D.F., UNION LAKE, MICH.

Salary cap memorabilia. ■

In a fever to know what really goes on in the world of sports? Will you feel awful until you find out? Send for a diagnosis to: The Good Doctor, 990 Grove Street, Evanston, Illinois 60201—then wait patiently.



CONTEST LEADERS

(through games played February 19)

Name	City/State	Points
1. Eitan Sabo	Boston, MA	17,161
2. Jeff Yaslowitz	Clearwater, FL	17,118
3. Scott Switalla	Los Angeles, CA	17,106
4. Domenic Staffieri	Toronto, ON	17,035
5. Keith Hanson	Brewster, WA	17,030
6. Jeff Rosenzweig	San Francisco, CA	16,993
7. Brett Thurn	Kissimmee, FL	16,939
8. Jay Darnell	Naperville, IL	16,924
9. Craig Switalla	Portland, OR	16,922
10. James Strating	Burnsville, MN	16,921
11. Keith Smith	Edinburg, VA	16,918
12. Yamil Velazquez	Bronx, NY	16,912
13. Patricia Williams	Mechanicsburg, PA	16,891
14. Paul Switalla	Los Angeles, CA	16,869
15. Jason Bergstrom	Bothell, WA	16,865

Congratulations to our weekly winners!

January 16 - 22

		Pts	Prize
Richie Hyun	Burbank, CA	1,367	\$150
Albert Keller	Port Alberni, BC	1,366	\$100
Albert Keller	Port Alberni, BC	1,366	
Albert Keller	Port Alberni, BC	1,366	

January 23 - 29

		Pts	Prize
John Milligan	Derby, NY	1,349	\$150
James Farias	Fall River, MA	1,325	\$100
Jeffrey Harshman	Austin, TX	1,316	
Sheila Miller	Kokomo, IN	1,312	

Jan. 30 - Feb. 5

		Pts	Prize
Philip Ku	Salt Lake City, UT	1,342	\$150
Alice Hunt	Westlake, OH	1,340	\$100
Ron Stasiowski	Lawrence, MA	1,339	
Jeffrey Rosenzweig	San Francisco, CA	1,339	

February 6 - 12

		Pts	Prize
Jeff Sippil	Highland Park	1,359	\$150
Casey Mattson	Marshall, MN	1,344	\$100
Robert Kmetik	Pittsburgh, PA	1,334	
Benjamin Bauer	West Bend, WI	1,328	

February 13 - 19

		Pts	Prize
Joseph Stozeski	Buxton, NC	1,360	\$150
Jeff Yaslowitz	Clearwater, FL	1,345	\$100
David Wittman	Renton, WA	1,345	
James McWilliams	Philadelphia, PA	1,345	

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THE FAN

By ELIZABETH TAYLOR

Stay in the Swim of Things

ALL THE BOOKS AND medical authorities say that swimming is the one sport everyone can do, even into old age and even if you have back problems or other ailments. I had hip replacement surgery last year, and swimming is the exercise my doctor recommends. It's my primary sport.

I'm not a nut for exercise, but I do go into the pool almost every day. It's part of my rehabilitation regimen, and I see good results. Swimming keeps me flexible and burns calories, so it's ideal. I'll keep it up.

Aside from its therapeutic value, I swim because I like to swim. I grew up in Southern California, so swimming—and the ever-present pool—was a fixture of family life. My earliest memories are of my brother Howard, my mother, my father, and me splashing around in the pool, having a great time.

I never could pass for a professional swimmer, but I admire them. At one time, many people made the news by swimming the channel between Los Angeles and Catalina Island. I was always in awe of such an incredible feat—even as a child I knew that kind of swimming took tremendous discipline and courage. Though it wasn't for me, I've always commended anyone who was the best.

Esther Williams was just great in those MGM musicals. We were at the same studio, and I remember watching the filming of one of her big swimming-musical numbers. Esther was a star, and her diving and swimming scenes were outstanding. When she finished a particularly tricky scene and the director yelled "Cut and print!" we all broke into applause. Some of the best swimming ever done is captured in her films.

Not only did Esther make a career for



I've always found swimming a personal pleasure, and I also appreciate the health benefits of the sport. Swimming keeps me flexible and burns calories, so it's ideal.

herself as MGM's swimming star, but she put a lot of girls to work who otherwise wouldn't have had a chance in movies. The girls were not just beautiful, but smooth-muscled and athletic, the best from swim clubs all across America.

Esther had been an Olympic swimmer. Water ballet wasn't an Olympics sport when she did it in the movies, but today synchronized swimming is part of the Games, thanks to her efforts. She lobbied for years to get that sport accredited.

I know that a lot of girls took swimming lessons after seeing Esther in those movies. She was a good role model—my own swimming even improved. But although I dipped in and out of the water for promotional shots for MGM and other studios, I never actually swam in a movie. Esther didn't have to worry about any competition from me.

Though I've always found swimming a personal pleasure, I also appreciate the health benefits of the sport. Athletes use water therapy for recovering from everything from muscle pulls to bone surgery. Pool workouts are part of every training camp, from boxing to football, and every other sport imaginable.

When horses injure a leg, the trainers

put them into whirlpool baths, and some places have big pools where the horses swim. Swimming provides a gentle muscle workout that helps tissues heal. If it's good for thoroughbreds, it's got to be good for you and me.

I can't ride horses since I was thrown and broke my back several years ago. And I'm still recovering from the hip surgery. But before the back injury, I often rode—as in "Giant," the movie I made with James Dean and Rock Hudson, and, of course, in "National Velvet" when I was a child. In that movie I first saw trainers soothe the animals after aggressive jumps and exhausting races. Throughout the shoot, the set was filled with expert horse handlers, and I was fascinated with the way they

used water to prevent injury and to heal injuries, which happened no matter how many precautions they took.

Accidents do happen, even with the best precautions. I know firsthand. I was shocked when I was thrown from that horse, and shocked even more when the doctors said I'd broken my back. But guess what? Swimming came to my rescue.

Today my back's fine, and so is my hip—but not fine enough to do really strenuous things like riding horses or lifting weights. I have enough sense just to leave those things for others who are good at them and who really get a kick out of them.

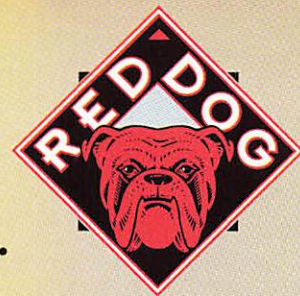
As for a sport that never lets me down, there's always swimming. It keeps my muscles toned, and I don't need complicated equipment. I'm fortunate that I live in California and have a terrific pool for my daily workouts. Thank goodness I can get the exercise I need just by going for a dip in the pool. Swimming is a sport that's fun to do, gives great results, and you can do it all your life. ■

In 1991 Academy Award-winning actress ELIZABETH TAYLOR launched the Elizabeth Taylor AIDS Foundation, whose focus is patient care.



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